VINCENT FRANK MAZZOLA

US NAVY 1943-1946

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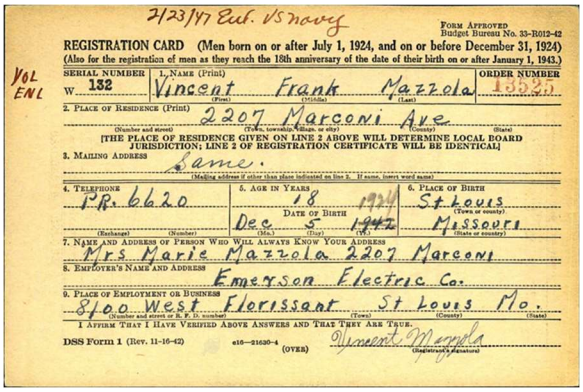
Vincent Frank Mazzola was born on 5-Dec 1925, in St Louis, MO. His parents were Maria (Mamie) Correnti (1896-1971) and Joseph M. Mazzola (1892-1951). Vincent attended Shaw Public Grade School. He had one sister: Angeline, and two brothers: Peter and Nicholas. In 1930, Vincent was living with his family on at 2251 Cooper Street in St. Louis MO. Vincent was four. By 1940, the family had moved to 2207 Marconi in St. Louis. Vincent was 14 years old at the time.

When Vincent was 18, he registered for the draft. Vincent was inducted in the Navy on 3-Mar 1943. He attended basic naval training at Farragut Naval Training Center in Idaho. Farragut was divided into six camps. Each camp accommodated 5,000 recruits and was nearly self-sufficient with twenty barracks, mess hall, admin building, drill field, sick bay, rec hall, drill hall and swimming pool. Vincent's service number was 872-70-91. He had reported on his enlistment documents that he was a machinist apprentice as a civilian and had last worked for Emerson Electric. He had completed 8 years of grammar school and two years of high school. When asked for a "Job Preference" Vincent indicated "Undecided."



7/23/47 Enl. US Navy

Form Approved
Budget Bureau No. 33-R012-42

REGISTRATION CARD (Men born on or after July 1, 1924, and on or before December 31, 1924)
(Also for the registration of men as they reach the 18th anniversary of the date of their birth on or after January 1, 1943.)

VOL ENL

SERIAL NUMBER W 132 | 1. NAME (Print) Vincent (First) Frank (Middle) Mazzola (Last) | ORDER NUMBER 13525

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) 2207 Marconi Ave. (Number and street) (City, township, village, or city) (County) (State)

[THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON LINE 2 ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL]

3. MAILING ADDRESS Same.
(Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same, insert word same)

4. TELEPHONE FR. 6620 (Exchange) (Number) | 5. AGE IN YEARS 18 | DATE OF BIRTH (Mo.) Dec (Day) 5 (Yr.) 1924 | 6. PLACE OF BIRTH St Louis (Town or county) Missouri (State or country)

7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS Mrs Marie Mazzola 2207 Marconi

8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS Emerson Electric Co.

9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS 8100 West Florissant (Number and street or R. F. D. number) St Louis (City) Mo. (County) (State)

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.

DSS Form 1 (Rev. 11-16-42) 16—21630-4 (OVER) Vincent Mazzola (Registrant's signature)

Upon entry into the Navy, sailors were often assigned as either a Seaman or a Fireman, with Fireman being an entry-level engineering rating. They would progress to Fireman 2nd class and 1st Class as they gained experience. In World War II, a U.S. Navy Fireman worked in the engineering department, performing maintenance and operating machinery, including ship's engines and boilers, to keep the ship running. Firemen were essentially engine room technicians and trainees, responsible for engineering watches, cleaning and repairing equipment, and recording instrument readings under the supervision of officers.

They were responsible for the ship's propulsion systems, ensuring that boilers and other machinery ran smoothly. Firemen performed minor repairs, lubricating bearings, and general cleaning of the engineering spaces. They monitored the equipment reading gauges and instruments to ensure all machinery was functioning correctly. As an entry-level rating, Firemen received training in engineering tasks, learning on the job from more experienced sailors. They also performed general tasks and participated in drills, including firefighting drills, as a standard part of their training.

In March 1943, Vincent was assigned to Landing Force Equipment Depot Naval Repair Base San Diego, California and then to the Amphibious Operating Base, Waipio Hawaii. The Amphibious Operating Base, Waipio was a U.S. Navy base located on the Waipio Peninsula near Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, that served as a critical training ground for Pacific island-hopping campaigns during World War II. At the time he was a FM2C. The base included training facilities, repair docks, and temporary structures to support the war effort, training both Navy and Marine personnel for complex amphibious landings against Japanese forces.

On 25-June 1943 he was at Landing Force Equipment Depot Naval Repair Base San Diego, His rank was FM3C. On 18-Aug 1943, Fireman 3rd Class Vincent received a Navy Training Certificate for having completed Fireman 2nd Class (F2C) and Fireman 1st Class (F1C) Training. His grade was 3.65. From 1-Apr 1943 to 30-Sep 1943 Vincent was a FM2c. Vincent trained in San Diego at the Navy Equipment Depot at the Landing Craft School. At Pearl Harbor with #22 Stand Landing Craft unit and later with the U.S.S Marmora IX. Vincent served on multiple ships while serving in the Navy.

On 4-Oct 1943 Vincent was mustered aboard LST- 481 as a Fireman 2nd Class. During WWII, Vincent served on two vessels. First on LST-481 and later on the U.S.S Marmora (IX-189)

About LST-481

LST-481 was laid down on 4-Sep 1942 at Richmond, Calif., by Kaiser, Inc. and launched on 2-Dec 1942; and commissioned on 15-May 1943. LST is short for Landing Ship Tank. Vincent is shown mustered aboard LST-481 on 4-Oct 1943, as a Fireman 2nd Class (F2C).

An LST's crew size in World War II varied, but generally consisted of approximately 100-120 personnel, though some could carry up to 300-400 troops in addition to the crew, depending on the ship's mission and available space.

The men joked, saying, an LST was short for “Large Slow Target”. While they were large and slow, only 26 were lost by enemy action, and 13 were lost due to weather, grounding on reefs, or accident, although many LSTs, including the 481, were damaged in varying degrees of severity by enemy planes, guns or ships. Of the 1,051 LSTs built, 113 were transferred to Great Britain under the Lend-Lease act, 4 were turned over to the Greek Navy and 116 were converted to repair ships and tenders of various kinds.

The LST crews were sent to Mare Island Navy Yard in Vallejo, California, near the northern end of San Francisco Bay. At Mare Island the crews of each new LST were living together for the first time. LST’s were not often named.

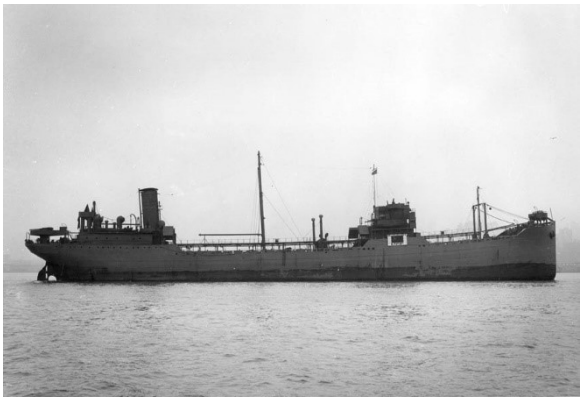
During World War II, LST-481 was assigned to the Asiatic-Pacific theater and participated in the following operations:

- Gilbert Islands operation-November and December 1943
- Occupation of Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls-January and February 1944
- Hollandia operation-April 1944
- Capture and occupation of Guam-July 1944
- Assault and occupation of Iwo Jima-February 1945
- Assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto-April 1945

On 21-Oct 1943, Vincent was assigned to the Amphibious Operating Base, Coronado, San Diego, California. On 31 Oct 1944 Vincent was assigned to the Receiving Station, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He was now a Motor Machinist Mate 2nd Class. Vincent was at Pearl Harbor through November 1944.

USS Marmora (IX-189)

Beginning on 13-Dec 1944 Vincent was mustered aboard the USS Marmora (IX-189) as an MM2C. USS Marmora (IX-189) was a United States Navy tanker in commission from 1944 to 1946. She saw service as a mobile floating storage ship during and in the immediate aftermath of World War II. Assigned to the Service Force, United States Pacific Fleet, Marmora departed Pearl Harbor on 28 January 1945 bound for the Marshall Islands, arriving at Eniwetok on 13-Feb 1945 for duty as a mobile floating storage ship. Four days later she continued on to Saipan in the Mariana Islands, anchoring there on 27 February to begin unloading aviation gasoline she had brought from



Pearl Harbor. He served on the USS Marmora until late November 1945 During his service on the Marmora, while working in the engine room, Vincent was burned.

Orders were cut on 19-Nov 1945 for Vincent and three other sailors to report to the Receiving Station, Flushing Ave. Brooklyn New York for duty onboard the U.S.S. Taconic (AGC-17). On 1-Dec 1945, Vincent is shown mustered at the Receiving Station, Brooklyn, New York as a MM2c.

The Standard Transfer Order included verbiage that stated, “Remember that while carrying out these orders your conduct will reflect to the credit or discredit of the Naval service. Below this recommendation of conduct was typed additional instructions: “While carrying out these orders you will not indulge in INTOXICATING BEVERAGES.” Vincent’s orders were to report and “on board when commissioned.” The Taconic was commissioned on 17-Jan 1946; thus Vincent was a plank owner.

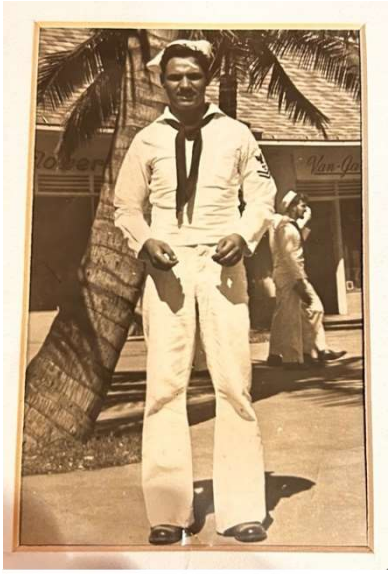
Vincent Mazzola, Plank Owner

A sailor who was part of the original crew during a ship's commissioning is called a “plank owner,” or sometimes a “plank holder.” The title is rooted in the tradition that the sailor has a metaphorical “ownership” of one of the ship's planks, an allusion to the days of wooden vessels. Being a plank owner is a rare and significant honor, representing being a member of a ship or unit's original commissioning crew and a source of lasting pride and recognition for those involved in establishing its foundation. Also, as a plank owner, the sailor has lifelong bragging rights and an honored place in the ship's history. It was very likely Vincent was quite proud of being an original crew member of the new ship.

U.S.S. Taconic

Vincent’s third ship was the USS Taconic (AGC-17). In January 1946, Vincent is shown mustered aboard the Taconic (AGC-17) as a MM3c. The Adirondack-class amphibious force command ship was originally laid down in December 1944 at Wilmington, North Carolina.

Acquired by the U.S. Navy, she was completed and commissioned on 17-Jan 1946, at Brooklyn, New York. She was designed as an amphibious force flagship, a floating command post with advanced communications equipment and extensive combat information spaces to be used by the amphibious forces commander and landing force commander during large-scale operations Assigned to the Atlantic Fleet, Taconic trained cadets and midshipmen in the Atlantic and the Caribbean for the next few years. In 1951 Taconic was featured as the command ship in the Richard Widmark film, The Frogmen.



Vincent as an MM2c.

Vincent served on the Taconic until he was Honorably Discharged on 1-Apr 1946. He was then placed in the Naval Reserves.

Vincent had been a Fireman 1st Class (F1/c) and finished as a Motor Machinist Mate 2nd Class (MM2/c). Vincent Frank Mazzola was eligible for the following WWII Medals and Commendations:

- Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal w/1 Star
- American Defense Service Medal
- World War II Victory Medal
- Navy Good Conduct Medal

Vincent on right as MM1c.

He married Vivian Marie Colombo (1922-1998) in November 1949. In 1950, according to the Federal Census, Vincent and his wife Vivian were living at 5123 Shaw Avenue in St. Louis. Vincent reported his occupation as “serviceman” in the “Repair Refrigerators Industry.” Vincent registered for the second draft in 31-Aug 1948. *Editor’s note: The “Second Draft” after World War II refers to the Military Selective Service Act of 1948, which reinstated conscription to meet the demands of the growing Cold War and eventually the Korean War, following a period where draft authority expired after the war in early 1947. The draft was used to fill military vacancies, with the first major draft calls significantly increasing after the Korean War began in 1950.*

Vincent was working for Westinghouse when he was called back into the Navy in 1948. He was living at 2207 Marconi on the Hill in St. Louis Mo. At that time, he was a refrigeration mechanic and electrical apprentice. He was called back for service on 7-Dec

1950 until 27-Jun 1951. When Vincent reported for duty, he and Vivian were expecting their first child. Vivian would prematurely deliver their first son in 1950 while Vincent was deployed at sea aboard the USS Neches. During that same deployment, Vincent's father died on 9-Jan1951 while Vincent was at sea aboard the Navy tanker the Neches.

U.S.S Neches (AO-47)

Vincent's Last Ship during the Korean War was the USS Neches (AO-47). The USS Neches was a Kennebec-class oiler in the United States Navy during World War II and the Vietnam War. She was the second U.S. Navy ship named for the Neches River in eastern Texas. Neches continued to operate with the Service Force, Pacific Fleet, for the next two years. She was placed under administrative control of the Naval Transport Service in July 1947 and was shifted to the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) two years later. During the post-war period she served as a point-to-point tanker, calling at Hawaii, the Philippine Islands, Japan, Southeast Asia, Arabia, Alaska, and the Canal Zone.

She was decommissioned on 10-Jul 1950 and was placed in the Pacific Reserve Fleet, San Diego Group. Recommissioned on 3-Jan 1951 at Oakland, California, she operated as an MSTS tanker and served with the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. She again returned to the Pacific Reserve Fleet for inactivation at Stockton, California, in June 1955.

On 6-Mar 1951, the Carbondale Illinois, Southern Illinoian newspaper announced, "The Louis Colombos Have Their First Grandchild." The son's name was Vincent James Mazzola. Vincent and Vivian would have two children: Vincent James and Maria Renee.

After his Honorable Discharge, Vincent returned to work at Westinghouse and became an Electrical / Mechanical engineer and later started his own business. He later built his own home in Kirkwood, St. Louis County, MO.

THE LOUIS COLOMBOS HAVE FIRST GRANDCHILD

Mr. and Mrs. Louis (Tango) Colombo, 312 North Ninth street, Herrin, are grandparents for the first time. Their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Mazzola of St. Louis have a new son. He has been named Vincent James.

The mother is the former Vivian Colombo. The baby's father is a machinest's mate second class in the navy and is serving aboard the tanker USS Neches, stationed at Yokohoma, Japan.

Vincent received a nice endorsement from the commander of the U.S.S. Neches when he left:

USS Natchez parentheses (AO – 47)
C/O fleet, Post Office, San Francisco, California

STATEMENT

6-August 1951
USS Natchez (AO – 47)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
This is to certify that Vincent F Mazzola served on board from December 1951 until June 1952. During that time he was in charge of a watch in the Engine room underway, a job normally assigned to assigned to a Chief Petty Officer. He was found to be reliable, trustworthy, and an excellent engineer. I would be pleased to have him back anytime he desires to return to the Navy.

W. P. Rosko, CHMACH, USN
Assistant Engineering Officer
U.S.S. Neches (AO – 47)

Vincent Mazzola died 8-Jul 1975 and is buried in Resurrection Cemetery in Afton, St. Louis County, Mo. His wife Vivian died on 15 JUL 1998. They are buried together in Resurrection Cemetery. They had been married for 26 years.

Supplemental Information

Letters Home:

December 1950

My Dearest wife,

I've been away from you 24 hours now and I sure miss you, and our little home. We have to stay here a week or two to get clothes and some more shots. We have to wait till our orders come back from Washington. Almost everybody here has babies and some more on the way. So I'm not the only one. I came on a train with a fellow from Chester Illinois. He has one baby already and one more coming in March. Baby, I was going to call tonight, but then I said I better not. We can't go out. We have to stay in for two straight weeks. So if you want to write to this address, you can. If I should get shipped out of here, I'll call you before I leave. Don't send me anything because I got everything I need here.

Well baby, I love you. I'll write tomorrow.

Vince

December 9, 1950

Dearest Vivian

Just got through talking to you on the phone. Glad to hear you're fine. I'm sending you $177 a month. You'll get the first check in four weeks. I was sitting at a table this afternoon putting a new watch band on my watch and here some guy grabs my shoulder and I look up and it's Paul from Eminence Missouri. He left his wife and two kids - 13 and 1 and a half. Honey, he weighs only 95 pounds and they still took him. So things must be rough. He's thinner than ever. You should see the men that are coming here. Our Res. fleet will sure be pretty big in a few more weeks. There's about 20 guys here that are as old as Tango. They think they're still young chickens. Oh baby, I'll write you sometime later.

Miss you and love you,

Vince.

17-May 1951 Thursday – Noon.
Hello Dearest Vivian,

Yesterday we went through the canal, and I had a couple of letters there were waiting for me. I was sure surprised I didn't expect any mail. I really had an interesting day. Going through the canal is really different from what I expected. The chief and I kept changing off. I run up top side a while and looked and come down to engine and then he'd come out to look. We got to locks on the Pacific side about 9 o'clock. We went up in four locks, and then the ship was raised to height of lake. We just went through 40 miles of lake. And then we got to the Atlantic locks. So then the ship went in the locks and was lowered down to the Atlantic side or really the Caribbean Sea. That's what we're sailing today. The Caribbean. We thought we'd get liberty in Panama. But the captain just dropped the pilot off and we steamed on and we're still steaming. Everyone was sore because of no liberty. I would love to go to shore to get you a souvenir. But no dice. We get to

Aruba tomorrow at noon (Friday). I sure enjoyed my trip through the Canal. It was sure raining all the way through. We seen <sic> the jungles and some animals while we're going through the lake. I was really pepped up when I got your letters. I'm sure glad to hear from you. I must've read those letters 10 times yesterday. One letter must've got lost. It was mailed April 28 and the others were May 6, 7, and 8. The one May 28 had your mom's letter in it also.

Editor's note: Missing balance of the letter.

18-May 1951 9:30 PM

Dearest Vivian,

We're now in Aruba. We pulled in in the afternoon. It sure is hot here. All I could see from the ship is oil refineries. Big huge plants like you and I seen <sic> in Texas on our honeymoon. One half of the crew went on liberty and the other half had the duty. I had the duty. I doubt if I were <sic> here tomorrow to go on liberty. We supposed to be loaded by noon and ready to shove off. A little while ago we got permission to go get a Coke on the dock. A watertender and myself. So we walked and walked. We were in our dungarees also. So finally, we came to the main gate and there were the guards let us out. So we ran across the street and drank two fast cold beers. And they were good. Then we rushed back in the gate. I now we're on the ship. But I tell you the beer really tasted good. There's a couple guys here that just came back from liberty. I hope we stay tomorrow. I'd like to get a chance to look around tomorrow. I got our son's pictures in front of me. That's sure a nice picture of him.

19-May 1951 Sat. night
Hello Baby,

I had to stop last night. I had to go to the engine room. Were <sic> on our way to Norfolk now. We left Aruba at 8.00 o'clock this morning. We're really loaded down. We supposed to pull into Norfolk next Friday. But there supposed to be a couple hurricanes and storms between here and Norfolk. We got our engines going pretty fast so maybe will outrun these storms. I had to watch this morning, and I slept from 1 to 6.30. Then I got up and went to galley and got a sandwich and now I write my honey. I figured that about Monday you should get my letters that were mailed in the canal. Dolly, I'll close now. I'll write you tomorrow.
I love you and miss you very much,
Vince.

On 28-May 1951, the U.S.S Neches reached Norfolk. Vince now had mere days before he was discharged and would meet his new son.

9-June 1951
Saturday – noon

My Dearest Vivian,

I'm going to write you a little bit before I hit the sack. I am sitting on the tank deck. There's a cool little breeze. It feels good. The sun is out and the ocean is pretty dark blue and smooth. Well honey, this morning I had my last inspection. We had a captain personally inspector. We were all in white standing up there in the hot sun sweating. I went up to the ships <sic> office today and

seen that letter the Navy sent. It just said to discharge Vince Mazzola. These last few days are sure long. I heard we are a few miles off of one end of Aruba now. We supposed to pull in there Monday morning now. And then there are four days there and then to Key West. That's all I keep thinking about is when we get to Key West. They could have let me off in Texas because they sure didn't need me on this trip. I've been trying to figure out how long they would take to discharge me. The Yeomen on here say about a week. But they probably don't know. When I'm at the place there's going to just discharge me and I know that when I'll get out, I'll call you right away and let you know when I'll be home. I'll be so glad to get home and be with you and VJ. And to be able to take it easy at nights and lay around and don't know what to do.

Honey, if things work right in the next few months and Westinghouse gives me a new car they may give a vacation in the fall. VJ will be older and we may be could go somewhere for a couple weeks or even have VJ with your mother if you want to. But we'll see later when I get there. I got to get home first. If pop's not working we could all bum around for a while if you want to. Save that letter that Bishop sent and that navy letter also because I couldn't understand you so good that night. I just want to read it. Everybody on here wishes they were me. Even one of the officers the other night told me that he wish he was out. This is Saturday noon. I wonder what our little boy is doing if you're out with him or if you got him in your yard or what. Is he getting any meaner I wonder. I've been wondering if he's able to sit up yet. I'm going to buy him a thing so he can sit in the front seat with us when we go for a ride. When you go to St. Louis the 16th don't say anything because we could spend a little time in Heron and I get some rest before we get to St. Louis.

Well, Dolly, I don't want else to say. Except I love you and I can't wait to see you again.
I love you very much,
Vince

13 June 1950
My Dearest Vivian

Yesterday I received two letter letters from you. One was written to 29th and 30th. I guess the one the 30th was the last one you've written. We're still in Git Mo Bay. Will probably be here for a little while yet. It sure is hot down here. A tourist ship a passenger ship was at the pier next to ours yesterday. I think they just stopped here yesterday only and went onto South America. I can't wait till I get home so I could see VJ laugh. He only laughed once for you when I was home last. You said he's looking like me. If he does, poor kid. You used to worry about him and now he's getting bigger than you are. I guess uncle didn't send the money because we were all on this trip. We had liberty yesterday. We went over to the Navy Air Station and drank beer all afternoon. I had a little hung over in the morning. I hope we get out of here soon. I guess I'm just anxious to get home so I can get out of the Navy. Well Dolly, I don't know what to say, I'll tell you more about Cuba when I get home. I love you and miss you very much.
I love you,
Vince.

Editor's note: In 1950, Naval Station Guantanamo Bay was a thriving U.S. military base operating under a lease agreement with Cuba and was largely a self-contained, small-town American community for its military personnel and their families. The base was already an English-speaking community with its own culture, supported by Cuban and Jamaican commuters who traveled to the base for work, enjoying better wages than they could find in communist Cuba. This relationship remained stable until the Cuban Revolution.

On 15-May 1951, the U.S.S Neches was approaching the Panama Canal. The Executive Officer issued his Plan of the Day stating with Reveille at 0500 and breakfast at 0715. At 0745 the crew was to “Air bedding on Cargo Deck life line and railing fwd end of 02 deck”. At 1945 hours (If dark enough), the men were to be treated to Movies – Beyond the Forest a 1949 movie starring Bette Davis and Joseph Cotton.

Editor’s note: On 16-May 1951, the U.S.S. Neches entered the Panama Canal. A “PLAN OF THE DAY” was written by the Executive Officer. The plan included:

PLAN OF THE DAY
Enroute to Canal Zone
Uniform of the Day: Officers: Khakis
Crew: Dungarees without shirts - White Hats
0500 Reveille
0530 Turn to
0715 Breakfast
0745 Quarter for muster, weather permitting, otherwise on stations
0800 Payday in Crew’s compartment midships
0845 (about) Station special sea details
0900 (about) Commence Transit of Canal

Note I. Carry out regular scheduled training program.
Note II. All men recommended for advancement in reading must complete the training courses prior to one July 1951.
Note III. All men top side must be in clean uniform of the day – dungarees with undershirts and white hats.
Note IV. Division officers canvas divisions for Navy relief Drive.
Note V. Mail orderly be ready to leave ship during transit of canal or immediately on arrival Cristobal.

S.H. RIGGAN
LCDR USN
Executive Officer

During the Korean War, the U.S.S Neches (AO-47) docked in Japan including Tokyo Bay and Sasebo. The men were given the following information about using U.S. currency in country.

U.S.S Niches (AO-47)
C/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco California

AO47:ke
9 MAR 51

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS MEMORANDUM: NUMBER 1-51.

Subject: conversion of US dollars to military payment certificates, for personnel arriving in Japan in Korea.

1. Quoted below for information and compliance of all personnel traveling on are assigned to vessels operating under MTMSTS PAC and this command, our Instructions issued by finance officer, headquarters, Japan, logistical command, APO – 343 concerning the use are possession of United States currency in Japan.

"The user possession of United States currency in Japan is prohibited. It accordance with official directives issued by General headquarters, Far East command, all United States currency will be exchanged for military payment certificates prior to leaving this vessel. In the event, this exchange is not accomplished prior to debarkation. Conversion must be affected within 48 hours of arrival in Japan. For your convenience, conversions may be made at one or more of the following locations: 1/79 finance dispersing section Yokohama; replacement training center, camp, Drake; are the Air Force Replacement Center, Camp Cole, Yokohama, or any US Army, Navy or Air Force, dispersing office of their agents, located in Japan or Korea. "All personnel are cautioned again, attempting to make purchases by the US use of US currency. Commanders will ensure that conversion of funds for enlisted personnel under their command is affected immediately on arrival at a port, camp, our station. "Remember that it is a court Marshall offense the deal, trade or barter by the use of US currency. S. H. Reagan Lieutenant Commander US Navy.