

ENS DONALD JOSEPH SIBBETT 3 February 1945

Radar Officer

I was aboard USS FRANK E EVANS DD 754 on 3 February 1945, the day she was commissioned. I'm what is known as a Plank Owner, being one of the crew on board the first time she was taken to sea. I was also aboard for her first Christmas and anniversary.

When I left FRANK E. EVANS in San Francisco, I flew east by a DC3, stopping every 500 mile increment. In the fall of '46 I entered Columbia grad school where I spent five happy years as a physical chemist. There followed 5 years at Mobil (South New Jersey), 2 years at Mellon Institute (Pittsburgh), 2 years at W. R. Grace (Baltimore), 11 years at Aerojet and Space General in Southern California, and 15 years running a lab for a beltway bandit (Geomet) in California and Maryland. In the middle, Elizabeth and I got married. We had two children.

I left the Naval Reserve in 1951 and was shocked at the report of USS FRANK E EVANS DD 754 sinking. As "Drucke" (LTJG Jack Arnold Druckemiller) has pointed out, the collision occurred at the bulkhead corresponding with our sleeping compartment. The loss of 74 members of the crew seems surprising considering the location of the ship outside the war zone and the exercise that were in progress.

Travel is not one of my aspirations. I have a kidney disorder (focal segmental glomerulosclerosis) and incipient bladder cancer. Both are under control but small stresses cause relapses. Current levels of airline comfort certainly qualify negatively.

I pass my time playing duplicate bridge, correspondence chess and bowling. Bets is very active in the local property owners association as treasurer and promoting reunions of her college.

(23 February 2002)