



Navy Daze: : Coming of Age in the 1960s Aboard a Navy Destroyer

Michael R Halldorson

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Imagine yourself being asked not to return to your college and then being thrust into active duty in the Navy in 1964, as unease in Asia is increasing. You join the fleet as a lowly seaman, chipping paint on deck all day, and regret willingly extending your two-year commitment to three years. You have asked for a big, powerful ship but are assigned to an old World War II destroyer--the USS Hopewell (DD-681). Your life has taken a turn you believe is "not for the better," but America is at peace, so it's not a problem, right? Then the Gulf of Tonkin Incident thrusts the United States and you into war. As the Hopewell serves on the gunline off Vietnam, you adapt and seek a more pleasant position in day-to-day ship operations. You find adventure on liberty in foreign ports, and learn the ways of a seasoned seaman. When your hitch is over, you leave the Navy, but the memories and life-long friendships will be with you forever. Navy Daze is the first-hand account of a young man from a small, northern California town, who enlists in the Naval Reserve only to find himself on a "tin can" in the South China Sea in wartime. His desire to enjoy the hospitality of foreign ports gets him into trouble more than once, but through it all he finds his calling in naval service, and returning to college, his calling in life.

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