



A symbol of freedom. Despite shortcomings due to man's fallibility it represents the truest democracy in the world today.



My name is **Emmett Baker**. I have created this web site from personal notes and pertinent locations on the World Wide Web. I was stationed on the Islet of Sorlen, Ulithi Atoll, from January until October of 1945. I was a Signalman (USNR). I hope this site will be of interest to those thousands of military personnel who were stationed at, or passed through, Ulithi Atoll during WWII. Please feel free to e-mail me with your comments and/or suggestions.



*Ulithi (or Urushi, or Mackenzie Island) is a coral atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia, in the western Pacific Ocean (Western Caroline Islands). Its islets have a total land area of 1.75 sq mi (4.5 sq km). Its huge lagoon is the world's fourth largest (209 sq. miles).*

*It was probably sighted by the Portuguese in 1526 and was undisturbed by Europeans until visited by a British naval vessel in 1791. It was the site of a Japanese seaplane base during World War II. It was occupied by U.S. forces in September 1944, and served as a large U.S. naval base for the rest of the war. Its inhabitants are probably partly*

*Polynesian and speak a distinctive dialect. Mokomok is the chief village. Population: (1980) 710.*

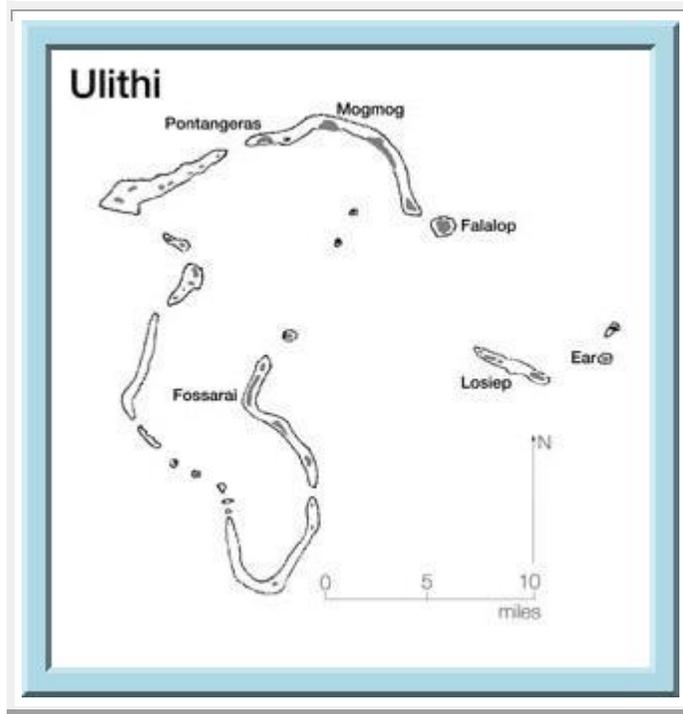
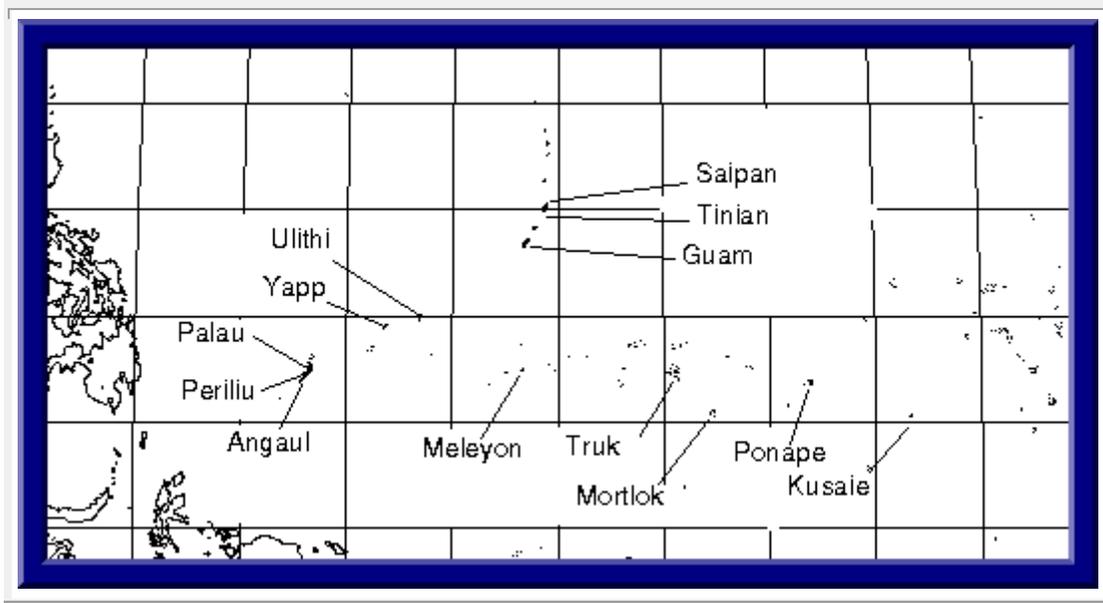
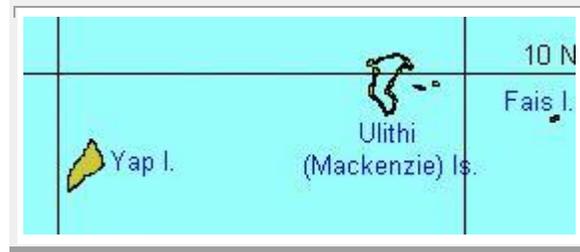


Photo of Ulithi as taken from the NASA shuttle.



### **HOW ULITHI WAS FORMED**

There were once, a very long time ago, some sisters in Yap. One in particular loved eating turtle, but her sisters would only give her the bad parts, like the fins. So she decided she was going to find a place where she could eat all the turtle she wanted. She took a coconut cup filled with sand, said some magic, then threw some sand ahead of her, which formed a strip of land that she could walk on. She did this until she came to a spot where there were lots of turtles. By this process, she formed the islands of Ulithi. She was happy at this new place because she could eat all the turtle she wanted, and not just the bad parts. After awhile her islet became overrun with ants and spiders, so she lit a fire and used the smoke as a bridge to go to another islet. Here too she found it overrun with ants and spiders, so again she lit another fire and walked over the bridge of smoke to the islet of Mog Mog where she settled. There is a platform there that

was her platform. It is the only place in Ulithi where turtles may be killed.

(This story was told to [Dr. Felicia R. Beardsley](#) by [Philip Nery](#)). Photo of Mog Mog courtesy of the Univ. of Guam. "Photograph of Philip Nery by RDK Herman, Pacific Worlds. Used with permission"



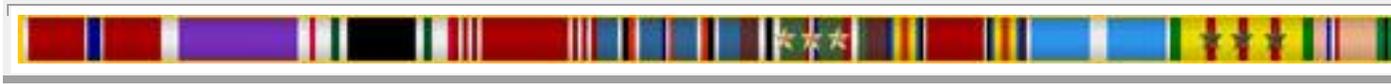
### **A TRAGIC DEATH AT ULITHI**

One of the most lamented deaths occurring on Ulithi was that of the Princess Kalara, daughter of King Ueg. During the initial American landings on the atoll in September 1944, it was believed that Japanese pockets of resistance remained in the then thick undergrowth and foliage on the islands of Mogmog and Asor. The natives were forewarned to retire to the beaches while American planes strafed the interior. For some reason, two of the natives neglected to heed the warnings....they were both struck by gunfire from the strafing planes. One was Kalara, the young and beloved princess of Ulithi. She was taken aboard a hospital ship in the lagoon, but medical care was ineffective; she died two days later. Marking one of the more regrettable phases of war's touching the innocent, Kalara was buried on MogMog with services conducted by a navy chaplain. At the [native cemetery](#) on that island, one may observe the coral memorial, topped by a simple white cross bearing the inscription: **"Princess Kalara, Christiano, September, 1944"**

**\*This article is from THE ULITHI ENCYCLOPEDIA, published by WVTY, The Armed Forces Radio Station, Ulithi, Western Carolines. (If anyone has any information about WVTY while it was at Ulithi please contact me). (photo of MogMog cemetery by Christophe Descantes)**



- [Micronesia](#)
- [Pacific Ocean](#)



Somewhere on a Western Atoll where the sun is like a curse,  
And each long day is followed by another slightly worse,  
Where the coral dust blows thicker than the desert's shifting sands,  
And the white men dream of finer, cooler, cleaner, greener lands.

Somewhere in the West Pacific, where a woman's never seen,  
Where the sky is never cloudy and the grass is never green,  
Where the gooney birds scream nightly, robbing man of blessed sleep,  
Where there isn't any whiskey, just two cans of beer a week.

Somewhere in the blue Pacific, where the mail is always late,  
Where Christmas cards in April are considered up to date,  
Where we always sign the payroll and never draw a cent,  
Where we never miss the money, ' cause there's no place to get it spent.

Somewhere in a Western ocean, where the gooneys moan and cry,  
And the lumbering Deep-sea turtles come up on the beach to die,  
Oh, take me back to \_\_\_\_\_ the place I love so well,  
For this God-forsaken island is awful close to hell.....

(Written in 1944 by unknown author at Ulithi)



### [MILITARY LINKS](#)

- [Building the Navy's Bases at Ulithi](#)
- [Murderers Row](#)
- [Paintings by Douglas Raymond Cahoon](#)
- [Kaiten Suicide Submarines](#)
- [Ulithi-an overview](#)
- [U.S. Navy History](#)
- [Pacific Naval Battles](#)

- [More Kamikazes at Ulithi](#)
- [U.S. Navy in World War II](#)
- [Yap \(Ulithi\)](#)
- [USS Enterprise CV-6](#)
- [War in the Pacific](#)
- [Ulithi](#)
- [MogMog](#)
- [Sorlen](#)
- [Falalop](#)
- [Pacific Worlds](#)
- [Ulithi Project](#)

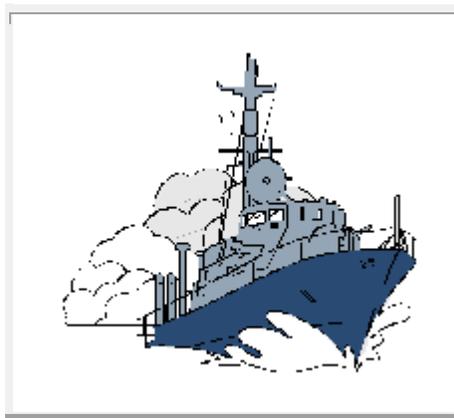


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**"NOW IT CAN BE TOLD"**

*This is "The Story of Ulithi" written in 1945.*

*Larry Tighe, The American Broadcasting Company correspondent on Guam has revealed a hitherto secret story about Ulithi. He has said that this is a 'now it can be told story'. The story of a mistake that the Japanese made last year which became perhaps the greatest single contribution to the speed of our march across the Pacific.*

*For many months Ulithi was the key spot in the Pacific. An atoll some 350 miles southwest of Guam in the Western Caroline Islands. Ulithi probably isn't even on your map of the Pacific---it's that small. It's made up of groups of islands with names like MogMog, Asor, Sorlen, Fassarai and even now it shows no scars of battle. When we took the Marianas and Peleliu, the Japs abandoned Ulithi as worthless and withdrew to Yap. The Japs were convinced that none of the islands could support an airfield. In fact, they were sold on the idea that Ulithi was worthless so we moved in without a struggle. This was the secret Pacific base you occasionally heard discussed.*

*The Japs overlooked the possibility of Ulithi as a fleet anchorage and they haven't the knowledge of what seabees can do when they are really pressed.....so like money from home this top fleet anchorage was grabbed up by the Navy and put to immediate use. The seabees built an airfield right where the Japs said it was impossible.....even if it does have a dog-leg at one end and gives one fidgets every time he takes off from or lands on it.*

*In the months of preparation for the Iwo Jima and Okinawa operations, Ulithi became the hub of almost all naval operations in the Pacific. Here our vast fleet could drop anchor and pick up supplies, rest the crews and square away minor repairs. Ulithi became the first anchorage west of Eniwetok in the Marshalls that was large enough to hold all of our fleet.*

*The chagrined Japs knew we were there and occasionally they sent planes over for nuisance raids from Yap and other bases but Marine fighter squadrons took over patrol of these enemy-held islands and kept their ability to give us trouble down to a minimum.*

*It was to Ulithi that the crippled aircraft carrier, (Benjamin) Franklin was towed when she nearly capsized near the coast of Japan. Ulithi can take a bow too for being a great aid in keeping our fleet at sea for months without return to Pearl Harbor or other safe areas to clean up and rest after a comparatively short time in enemy waters.*

*Most certainly this mistake of the Japanese--the abandonment of the Ulithi Atoll---brought the end of the war much closer and possibly years closer.*

*~~~The End~~~*

*To underscore the importance of Ulithi the following is noted: "In March 1945, 15*

*battleships, 29 carriers, 23 cruisers, 106 destroyers, and a train of oilers and supply ships sailed from Ulithi, the biggest and most active naval base in the world." That the Japanese never attempted to defend Ulithi has remained to some military people a mystery. Ulithi was, from September 1944 to August 1945, the greatest fleet anchorage the U.S. ever had in the Pacific. Ulithi could hold over 1000 large ships at one time, and its capacity exceeded that of Pearl Harbor. Ulithi is located 4000 miles further west at the edge of the Western Sea Frontier—the military term for the area of combat in the western Pacific during 1944-45.*



### **U.S.S. FRANKLIN (CV-13)**



- [Attack on the USS Franklin \(CV-13\)](#)
- [Oral History of the Attack](#)



Aircraft carrier Franklin after Japanese attack. She limped back to Ulithi where she received temporary repairs.

The following is quoted from the USS Relief (AH-1) Wartime Chronicle:  
"On the 24th. and 25th of March, the Relief (AH-1) received casualties from ships returning from the task force operations against the Japanese homeland. The USS Bountiful [AH-9] was in the harbor at the time. The Relief transferred many of her cases to the Bountiful, retaining on board only those casualties which were to be evacuated to rear area hospitals. Among the casualties received were patients from the huge first line aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Franklin [CV-13]. The big ship stood into the harbor on the 24th, and lay off the stern of the Relief. She was an awesome sight, Twisted [sic], torn, her entire structure distorted by the intensity of the explosions, she lay listing hard to one side. The casualties came aboard horribly burned. They had brought the ship back from off Tokyo, in spite of the severest damage any ship has ever suffered, and still survived."



This aerial photo shows an islet in the northern section of Ulithi looking southward into the lagoon. Many of the naval vessels of the 3rd and 5th fleets are seen. It was in this area that the USS Randolph was hit by a Japanese plane in March 1945.

The Japanese had once hoped to mount frequent kamikaze attacks on US ships at anchor in Ulithi, but the poor condition of the airfields in Truk from the continued pounding they took from allied raids did not permit them to do this.

NOTE: There were two fleets in the Pacific, the 3rd and 5th. Occasionally a 7th fleet was mentioned. This was done to confuse the Japanese it actually being elements of the 5th fleet, under different commands.

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## AN AIR ATTACK ON ULITHI WHICH NEVER HAPPENED

- [Aichi Seiran](#)

**U.S.S. RANDOLPH (CV-15)**



This photo shows the area of damage to the Randolph after being hit by a Japanese "Frances" bomber on 11 March 1945. The Randolph was anchored off the Islet of Sorlen, Ulithi Atoll. The attack came without warning. The first sitting for the movie being shown on the hanger deck was just leaving and the second sitting arriving. The movie that night was, according to Melvin Ray Schultz, ARM2/c, "A Song to Remember--The Life of Chopin". The repair ship USS Jason ARH-1 is tied up along-side. The carrier was hit on the starboard side aft just below the flight deck, killing 25 men and wounding 106. The salvage vessel Gear (ARS-34) was damaged by collision with the Randolph during fire-fighting operations.

Repaired at Ulithi, Randolph joined the Okinawa Task Force on 7 April 1945.

The following is quoted from the USS Relief (AH-1) Wartime Chronicle:  
"On the 11th of March, 1945, Air Flash Red was received in the harbor. Two Japanese suicide planes came into the area. One crashed into the after flight deck of the U.S.S. Randolph [CV-15], an aircraft carrier lying off the Relief's starboard quarter. The other Japanese plane mistook Sorlen Island for another aircraft carrier, and made its suicide dive into the coral island just forward of the Relief. The response to the alert had been very slow in the harbor. Many ships had working lights, cargo handling lights still burning, even after the second plane had crashed. Some of the ships were having movies on their topside decks, and never did secure from them.  
At four o'clock in the morning, the Relief received casualties from the U.S.S. Randolph. Most were suffering from severe burns of the body. Again during the evening of the 12th of March Air Flash Red was received from SOPA. No attack this time."

The Randolph was stricken from the Navy List 1 Jun 1973. Disposed of, sold by Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) for scrapping 1 Apr 1975

The following is from the history of the [USS Current, ARS-22](#) (Auxiliary Repair and Salvage).

"While anchored near Sorlen Island at Ulithi Atoll on March 11, an explosion occurred at 2007 approximately a mile off Current's starboard quarter. Current immediately went to general quarters and made preparations for getting underway. With the anchor at short stay, a radio communication was received with orders to proceed immediately to the vicinity of Anchorage 27. At 2020, Current was underway to the anchorage site and made all preparations for fire fighting. Both fire monitors were manned. Six fire hose lines were rigged and pressurized, two forward, two amidships, and two aft, as well as an emergency line to Chrysler pumps and foam throwing equipment. Without warning, two low flying Japanese twin engine Yokosuka P1Y "Frances" bombers had appeared. One crashed onto Sorlen Island. The other bomber carrying a two thousand pound bomb struck the aircraft carrier USS Randolph CV-15 on the starboard quarter between the flight deck and the gallery deck at frame 205-210, the CO2 room, the aviation repair shop

and the fantail. The Kamikaze penetrated the after hanger deck killing twenty-five men and wounding one-hundred six. The impact and explosion destroyed approximately 4,000 square feet of the flight deck. An inferno of flames fed by gasoline from the destroyed bomber, destroyed carrier aircraft on the flight deck and in the hanger deck engulfed the entire stern section of the Randolph.

Once abeam of the Randolph, Current sent the carrier a message that preparations were made to spray chemical fire fighting foam. At 2030, Current maneuvered alongside the port quarter of the Randolph and began spraying foam and water from every available piece of equipment. The USS Munsee ATF-107 had already taken a position on the starboard quarter of the Randolph. Maneuvering was extremely difficult because of the many small boats milling around the area, the swinging of the Randolph at her anchor, the poor visibility caused by thick black smoke from the burning carrier, darkness and by blinding search lights directed toward Current's bridge. All fire hoses and both fire fighting monitors were in continuous operation though out the entire time Current was alongside the Randolph. While maneuvering to effectively apply fire-fighting foam, the swing of the Randolph at anchor and the force of the wind caused Current's stern to swing under Randolph's flight deck. Current's main topmast collided with the flight deck of the carrier causing the topmast to be bent forward. The collision also severed the topmast shrouds and caused the TBL radio transmitter antenna to slacken. This resulted in a loss of all radio communication. During the time spent alongside the Randolph, enormous amounts of water and chemical foam were pumped on the burning carrier in an attempt to extinguish the massive fires. Detonating 40mm and 20mm ammunition, exploded shell casings and other debris continuously rained down on Current's decks. Fortunately, none of Current's crew was injured during this operation. Later, among the debris on Current's decks, part of a human hand was found. Fingerprint impressions were made of the hand and given to Comservron Ten. The hand was then discarded overboard. At 2046, Current departed the side of the Randolph and circled the carrier in an attempt to moor again in a more favorable fire fighting location. While circling, other vessels moved into the vacated berth, preventing Current from returning to continue assistance. At 2155, Current received instructions to stand clear and return to anchor nearby. The fires on the Randolph were successfully extinguished and the damage repaired by the crew of the Randolph and the repair ship USS Jason ARH-1. The hospital ship USS Relief AH-1 anchored off of Randolph's starboard quarter, received the casualties, most suffering from severe burns. Randolph's dead crewmen were buried on Falalop Island. USS Randolph was repaired and later rejoined the 5th Fleet, participated in the invasion of Okinawa and launched aircraft in the massive fire bombing raids on the Japanese home islands until the Japanese Surrender."

During my stay at Ulithi I often viewed an impressive array of ships anchored in the lagoon. Here are some [carriers](#) lined up right outside my window(so to speak). Here is what a [fast carrier](#) could do.



This is a photo of the USS Relief, AH-1 (hospital ship) taken at Ulithi on 13 March 1945. On board were the wounded from the USS Randolph.

### **JAPANESE "Frances" BOMBER**



A picture of a Japanese "Frances" bomber, the type which hit the carrier Randolph and Islet of Sorlen on 11 March 1945.

(NOTE: 11 March 1945: Operation "Tan No. 2" - The Kamikaze Attack on Ulithi: Kyushu. Twenty-four Yokosuka P1Y "Ginga" (Milky Way) "Frances" twin-engine bombers take off from Kanoya on a one-way Tokko (suicide) mission to attack American carriers at the Third Fleet's anchorage at Ulithi.)--only two planes got to Ulithi, one hitting the carrier Randolph and the other the Islet of Sorlen.

Now some may wonder why the Islet of Sorlen, rather than another large ship, was hit by the second "Frances" bomber. I have a theory. You must remember that this happened just after 8 PM during darkness. I believe the second Japanese plane mistook the islet for an aircraft carrier. No alert had been sounded when the Japanese planes appeared (that is another story). The islets and ships were all lighted and movies were being shown. From the signal tower on Sorlen a road crossed the islet traversing from the signal tower to the mess hall. I believe the Japanese pilot thought the signal tower was the island of a carrier and the road the flight deck. He hit the middle of the road. If he had chosen the movie theatre, where many hundred men were assembled, he would have inflicted a great many casualties.

The Islet of Sorlen is shown below (1944-45).

**SORLEN ISLET**



Photo courtesy of Art Bates

**SORLEN ISLET (today)**



**USS THORN DD647**



Destroyer USS Thorn in a floating dry-dock for repairs. This floating dry-dock was anchored off Sorlen Islet (in background) and was instrumental in keeping our fleet at sea without the necessity of returning to Pearl Harbor or the US mainland for all but major repairs and over-hauling. The floating dry-dock is believed to be the [AFDL-32](#) (or similar) which came from Pearl Harbor with the USS Current late in 1944. Photo courtesy of Kaj Swenson.

- [USS Houston \(CL-81\) in Drydock at Ulithi](#)
- [WWII Docking Pictures](#)

### **FALALOP ISLET**



[USMC -VMD354](#)

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- [U.S.S. Randolph History](#)
- [Photos of USS Randolph \(CV-15\)](#)
- [Don Strating - Eye Witness](#)

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### **LIBERTY SHIP--S.S. JOHN MCLEAN**



I arrived at Ulithi on 21 January 1945 having traveled from San Francisco, California, under the Golden Gate bridge (shown above), on this Liberty Ship. With this date in mind consider the following record of Japanese submarines lost during the war: *I-48 lost 01/23/1945 off Ulithi Atoll (09-45N,138-20E) LCDR Matsunobu Toyama Force KONGO. Attack of 3 US DEs*

Liberty ship was the name given to the EC2 type ship designed for "Emergency" construction by the United States Maritime Commission in World War II. Liberty ships, nicknamed "ugly ducklings" by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The first of the 2,751 Liberty ships was the SS Patrick Henry, launched on Sept. 27, 1941, and built to a standardized, mass produced design. She was built in 4 Days 15 Hours 29 Minutes. The 250,000 parts were pre-fabricated throughout the country in 250-

ton sections and welded together in about 70 days. Another Liberty ship, the SS Robert E. Peary was built in four and a half days. A Liberty cost under \$2,000,000.

The Liberty was 441 feet long and 56 feet wide. Her three-cylinder, reciprocating steam engine, fed by two oil-burning boilers produced 2,500 hp and a speed of 11 knots. Her 5 holds could carry over 9,000 tons of cargo, plus airplanes, tanks, and locomotives lashed to its deck. A Liberty could carry 2,840 jeeps, 440 tanks, or 230 million rounds of rifle ammunition.

Libertys carried a crew of about 44 and 12 to 25 Naval Armed Guard.

The keel of the S.S. John McLean was laid on 9-14-42, launched 10-23-42 and delivered on 11-7-42.

### **U.S.S. STOCKDALE ~ DE-399**



I was transferred from Ulithi to Guam in October 1945 and assigned to the USS Stockdale as Signalman in Charge. We made one weather patrol off Guam during Christmas of 1945 after which we came back to Philadelphia via Hawaii and the Panama Canal. We then went to Green Cove Springs, Fla. where the ship was 'moth-balled'. I returned to Boston and was released to the Inactive Naval Reserve.

This photo of the USS STOCKDALE was taken in New York harbor in either 1944 or 1945 and is courtesy of Robert M. Eaton, a former crewman.

DE- 399 USS STOCKDALE CLASS - Edsall

Displacement 1,250 Tons, Dimensions, 306' (oa) x 36' x 10' 5" (Max)

Armament 3 x 3"/50, 2x 40mmAA, 10x 20mm AA, 3 x 21" TT, 1 Hedgehog, 8 DCT's 2 DC racks.

Machinery, 6,000 SHP; 4 Fairbanks Morse Model 38d81/8 Geared Diesel Engines, 2 screws

Speed, 21 Knots, Crew 186.

Laid down by Brown Shipbuilding, Houston on August 31 1943. Launched October 30 1943.

Commissioned December 31 1943.

Decommissioned April 18 1947.

Stricken July 1 1972.

Fate: Sunk as target off Florida, May 24 1974

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"Drenched from head to foot with salt water. Sleep with a leg crooked around my rack so

I won't fall out. Put wet bread under my dinner tray to keep it from sliding.

A DE, my friend, is a Destroyer Escort. It's a ship long and narrow and sleek, something like a destroyer but much smaller.

They are rough and tumble little ships. Their decks are laden with depth charges. They can turn in half the space of a destroyer.

They roll and they plunge. They buck and they twist. They shudder and they fall through space. They are in the air half the time, under water half the time, their sailors say they should have flight pay and submarine pay both."

Ernie Pyle-War Correspondent

Ulithi, 1945

- [USS Stockdale DE 399](#)



**U.S.S. MISSISSINEWA**



## **AFTER TORPEDOING**



- [USS Mississinewa \(AO-59\)](#)
- [More Info and Pictures](#)
- [Mississinewa Photo](#)
- [Kaiten Group "Kikusui"](#)
- [Naval History Magazine](#)
- [USS Rall DE 304 Sinks Kaiten](#)

## **THE SHIP FOUND</CENTER< font>**

The exact location of the USS Mississinewa had been unknown. Several American and Japanese dive teams had searched for the vessel without success. On April 6, 2001 at 12:10 PM (Ulithi time) the ship was found in 133 feet (not 120 feet as originally reported) of water by an independent team of three divers from the San Francisco area. This 553-foot ship was the only American naval ship sunk by a Japanese Kaiten, a one-man suicide submarine.

## **OTHER LOSSES AT ULITHI**

*The Mine Sweeper USS YMS-385 sunk by a mine off Ulithi, Caroline Islands, 1 October 1944.*

*On January 12, 1945, while anchored in Ulithi Atoll, the USS Mazama (AE-9) was struck by a Japanese torpedo. Number one hold had 5300 tons of ammo. The number one hold was secured and the ship lived to fight another day. There was no ammunition explosion. (related by Walter Brooker, Warren McMath and Ed Schubel, 43-45)*

*Also on January 12, 1945 the LCI-600 sank at Ulithi.*



Official Navy photo showing the USS Shannon at Ulithi in March 1945. The ships in the background include the USS FLINT (CL-97) in left center, and the USS Miami (CL-89) at the right. Three Essex-class aircraft carriers are anchored in the middle distance. The USS Enterprise (CV-6) is at the far left.

- [Destroyers OnLine - Destroyer Escorts](#)

- [Historic Naval Ships Visitors Guide](#)
- [Destroyer Escort](#)



- [Tokyo Rose--A report](#)

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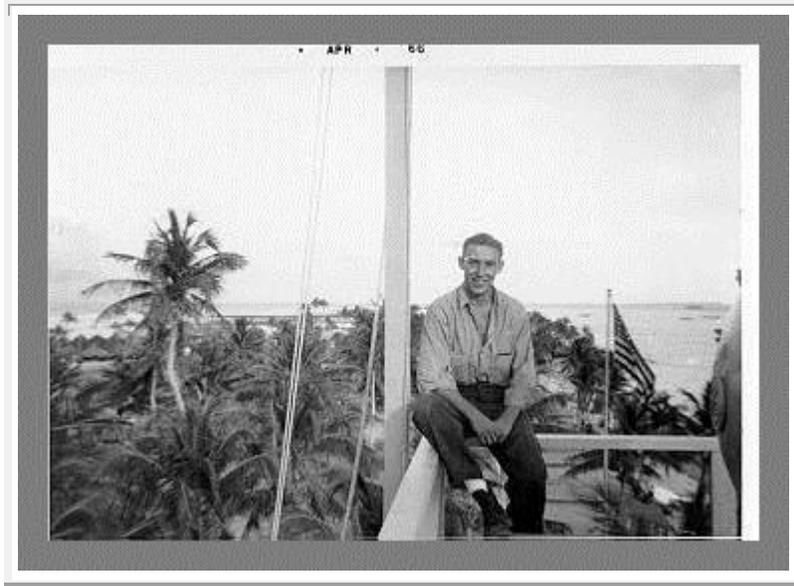
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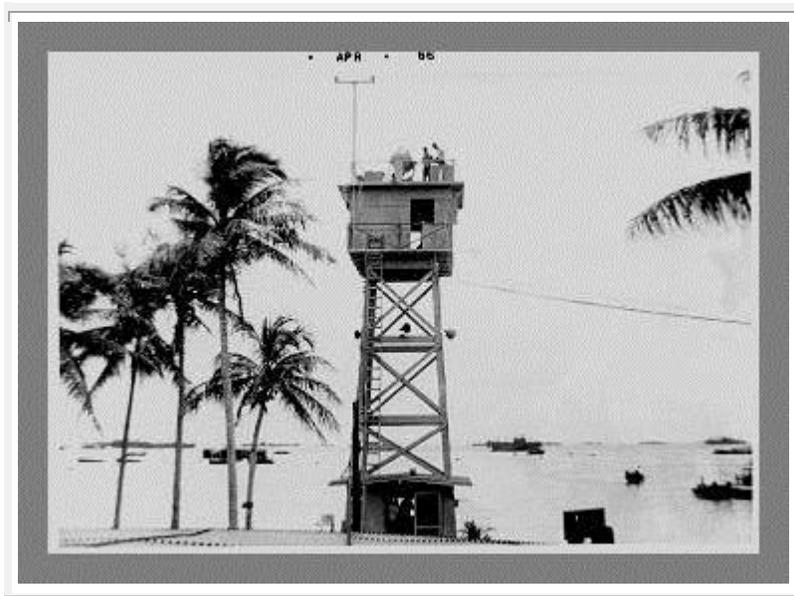
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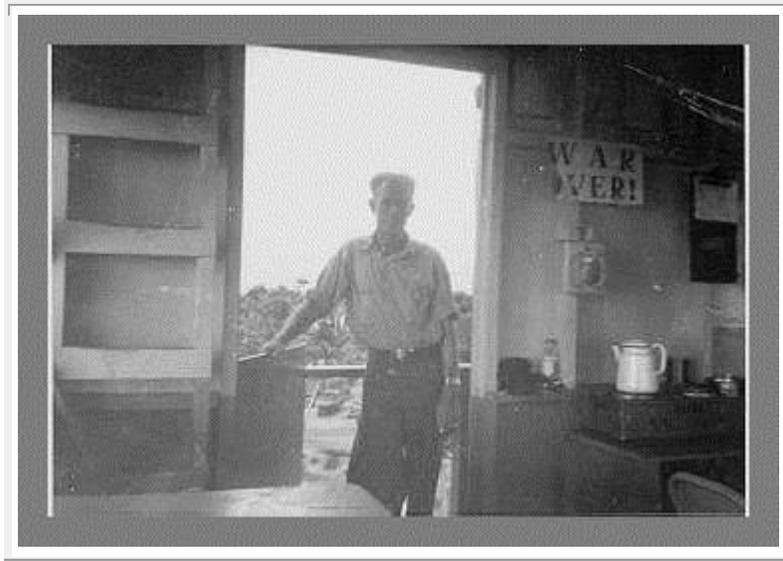




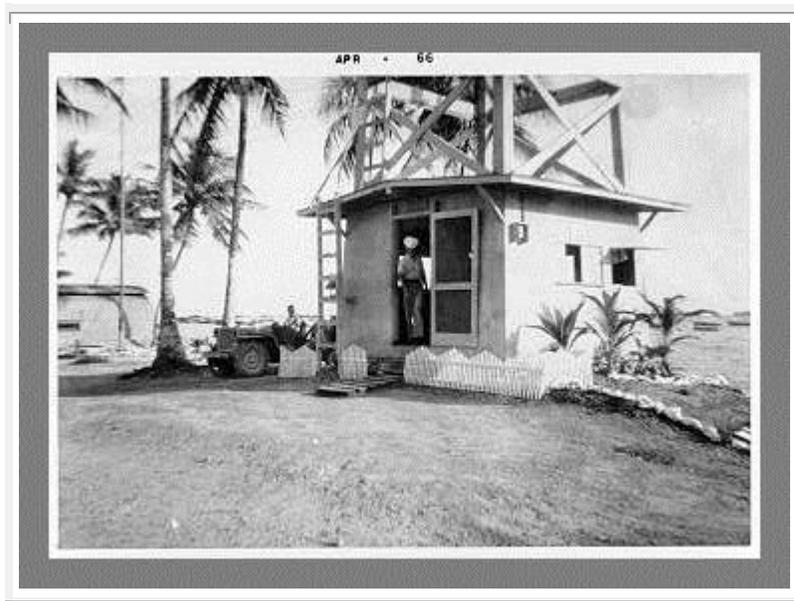
Here I am sitting atop the signal tower on the Islet of Sorlen.  
Photo © 2001-9



The signal tower looking South towards the lagoon. The large, 24 inch carbon arc light  
and the yardarm blinker lights are seen on top of the tower.  
Photo © 2001-9



Inside the signal tower. The ladder leads topside where the 24 inch carbon arc light is located. Note the newspaper posted on the wall indicating that the war is over. Photo © 2001-9

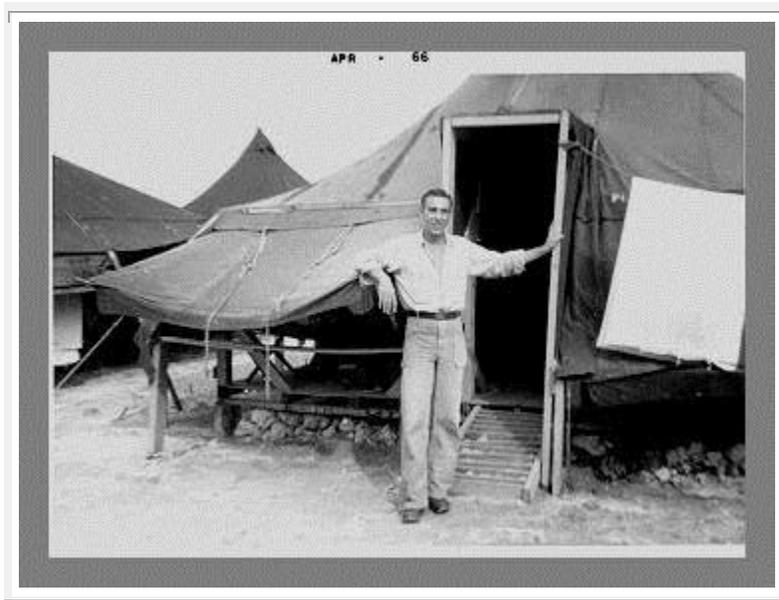


At the base of the signal tower was the Officer of the Day shack. The day the war ended I was acting as messenger for the OD. I took the jeep which you see, drove to the far end of the island and let go one shot from my .45 automatic.

Photo © 2001-9



Another picture from the top of the signal tower.  
Photo © 2001-9

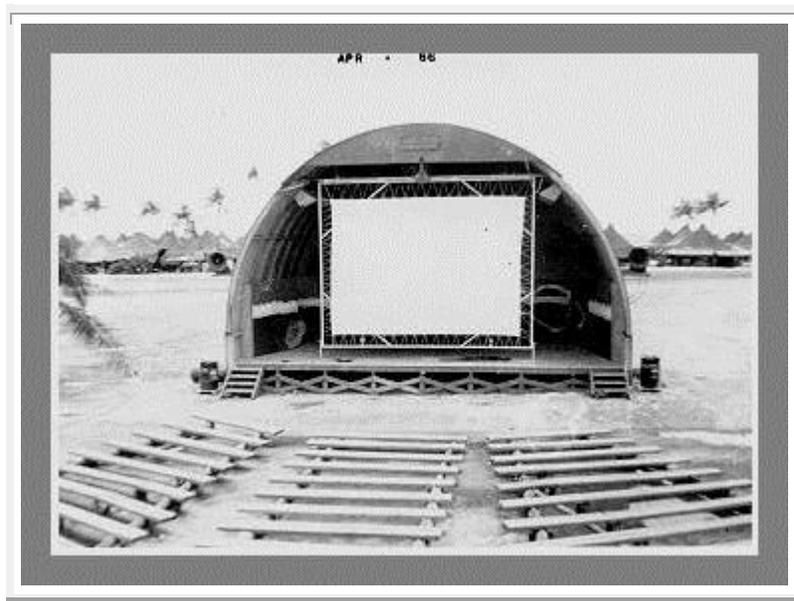


A picture of me in front of my "town house" otherwise known as a tent.  
Photo © 2001-9



This is our beer garden where, each evening, we could purchase two bottles of Coca Cola or two cans of 3.2 beer--Fort Pitt as I recall.

Photo © 2001-9



The movie theatre with soft, cushion seating as you can see. This theatre was constructed on Sorlen Islet in 19 days. We were watching a movie here when the two Japanese "Frances" bombers came on the evening of March 11, 1945. One hit the carrier Randolph, the other hit our islet just a few hundred feet from where I and a few hundred men were enjoying the movie.

Photo © 2001-9



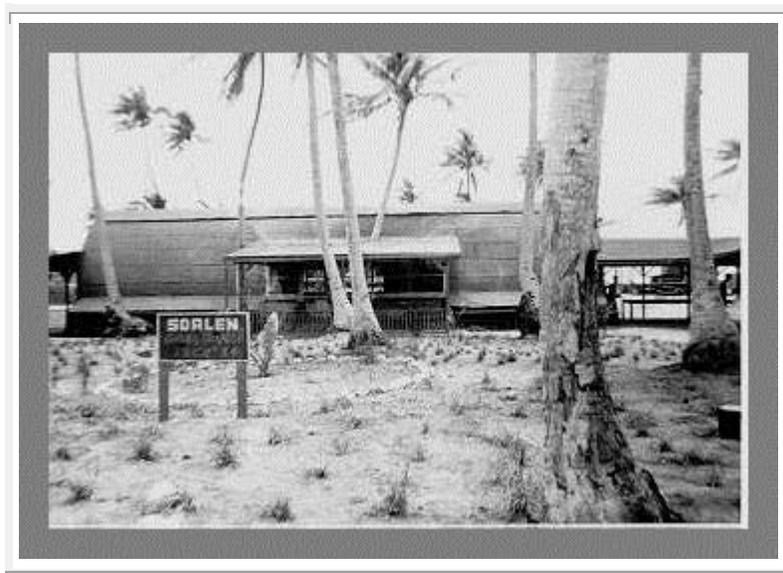
The Chapel where religious services were held each Sunday. Photo © 2001-9



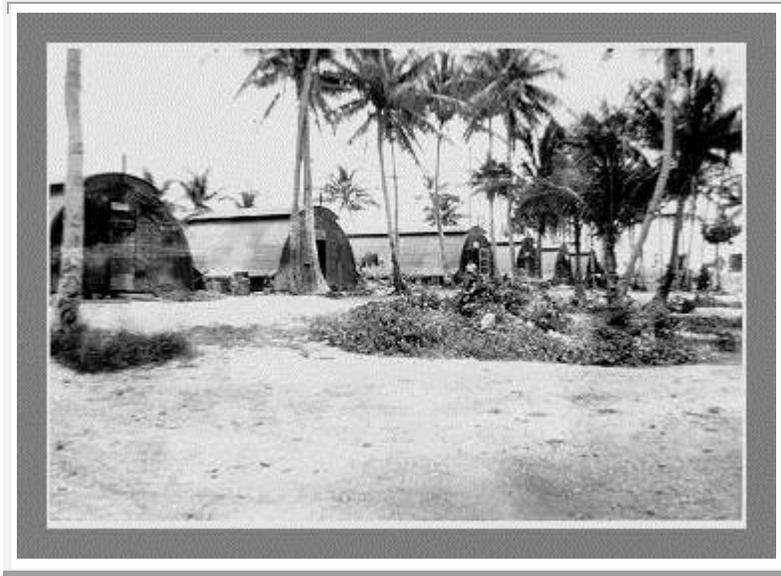
The basketball court. Recreation was an important part of life here on Sorlen. Photo © 2001-9



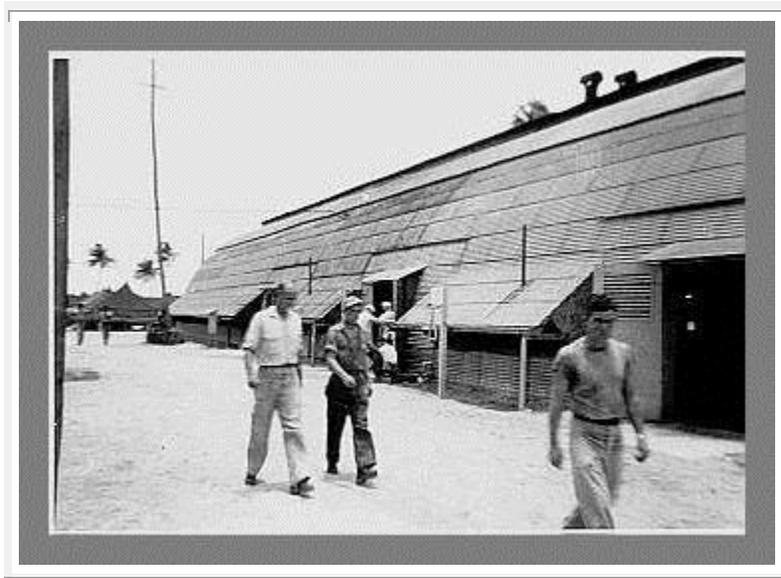
The Ships Stores or PX where we purchased our personal supplies such as candy, cigarettes, toothpaste, etc. Photo © 2001-9



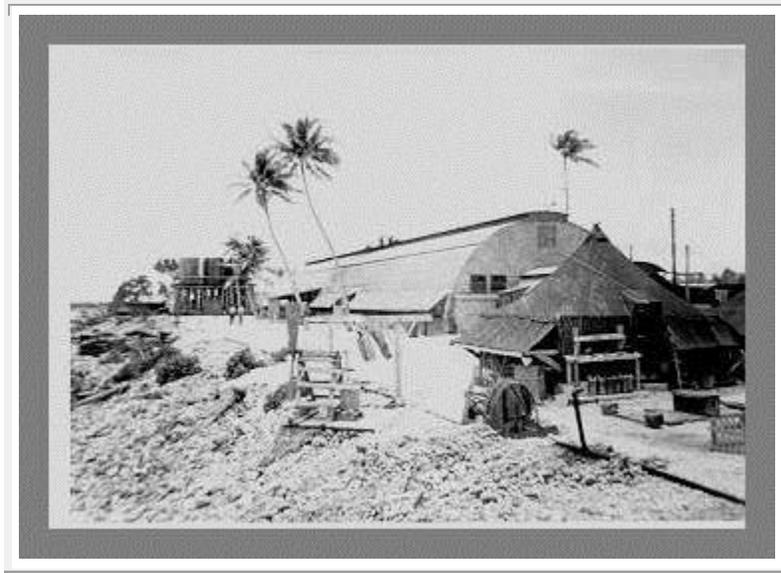
The main administration building, one of many on the South side of the islet. Photo © 2001-9



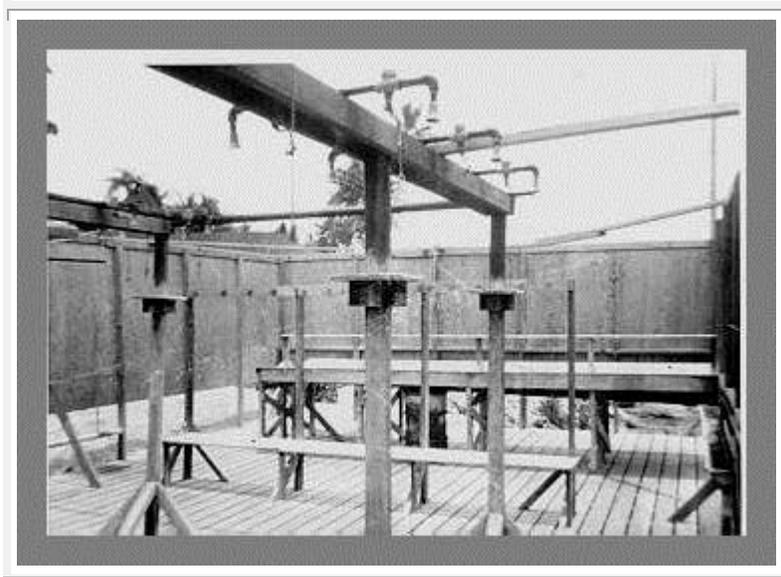
More of the various buildings such as the MA shack, communications building, etc.  
Photo © 2001-9



The front of the mess hall. Photo © 2001-9



The rear of the mess hall located on the North or ocean-side of the islet. The large wooden tanks in the far rear were where sea water was converted to fresh water. Photo © 2001-9



Our shower and washing facilities. Photo © 2001-9



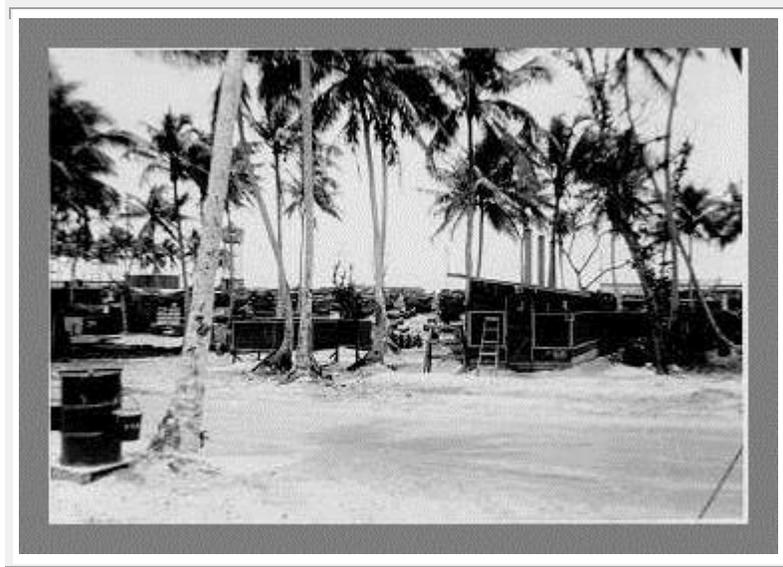
On the North side of the islet showing the showers in the distance. They were built over the rocks to facilitate drainage of the water. Photo © 2001-9



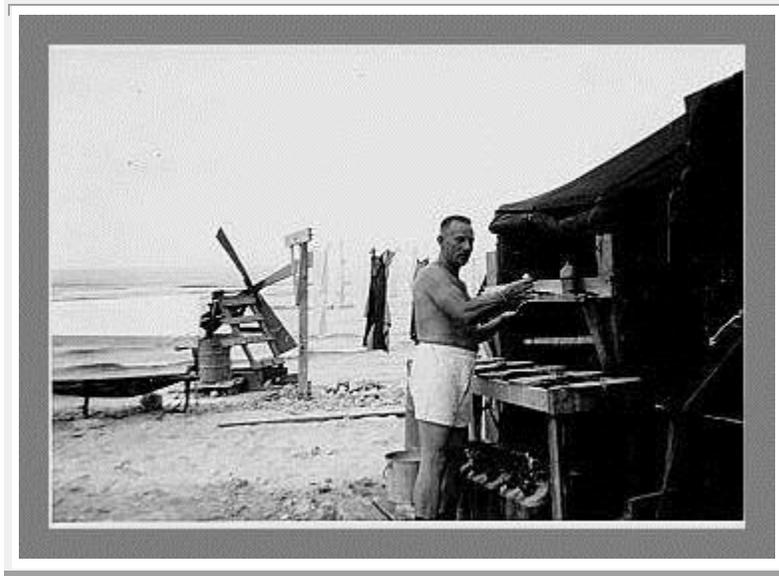
On the way to the showers (taken at a discreet distance). Photo © 2001-9



A group of tents in a tropical setting. Photo © 2001-9



Outside facilities--very necessary. Photo © 2001-9



Morning duties (washing, shaving, etc.) outside his tent. The windmill-like contraption in the background is a washing machine. Wash is on the line. Photo © 2001-9



Six friends in front of their 'town-house'. Notice the fence. Photo © 2001-9

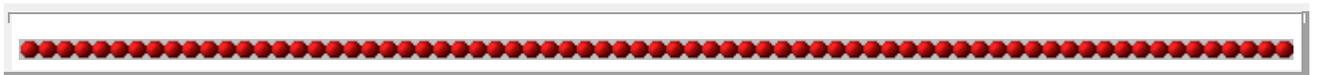
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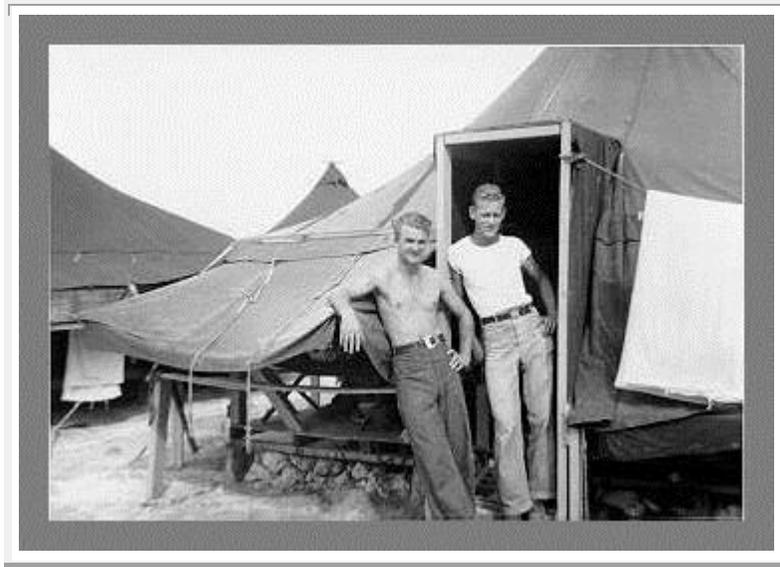
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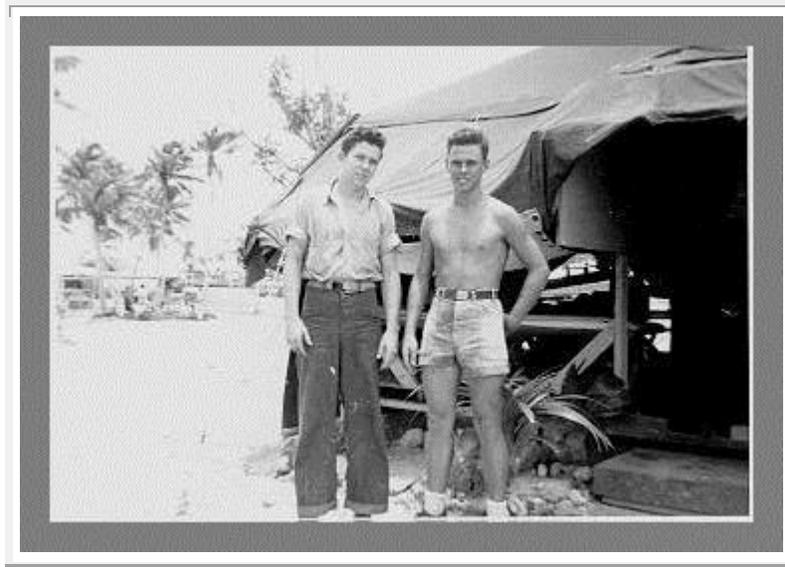
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Two more friends in the doorway of their 'condo'. Photo © 2001-9



More friends dressed for relaxation. Photo © 2001-9





This is the current resort hotel on the Islet of Falalop. See the following link for interesting information about present-day Ulithi.

- [ULITHI TODAY](#)

**This may be the Ulithi lagoon today with no ships.**



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## **INFORMATION ABOUT ULITHI ATOLL AND ITS PEOPLE**

I have taken the following information from "The 'ULITHI' Encyclopedia" published by WVTY, The Armed Forces Radio Station, Ulithi, Western Carolines, in 1945. Some is paraphrased, some direct quotes.

It was said that Ulithians are a simple, gentle and charming people. My infrequent contact with them bears this out. The servicemen enjoyed their infrequent contacts. The Ulithians had many sad experiences with the white and yellow man in days gone by. These outsiders had brought them disease and had taken advantage of their naive and trusting nature. The Americans, during their stay, tried to repair these wrongs and many, working among them, cured their diseases, cared for their spiritual needs and provided them with new luxuries.

When the Japanese took all the young men and women with them, they endangered the

continuation of Ulithi as a society. It would be too bad if Ulithi did not continue as a separate social unit but this may have been made impossible.

++++++

Ulithi Atoll is 19 1/2 miles long and 9 1/2 miles wide at its Northern and widest point. Its lagoon is the fourth largest in the world. (85 square miles capable of holding 1000 ships). The islets of Asor, Mogmog, Sorlen and Fassarai are the major ones with Lossau, Mangejang and Song, smaller but habitable. All-in-all there are thirty land areas which comprise this atoll. It is the largest atoll in the Carolines group.

++++++

Ulithi is a native name and its etymology is known by very few today. The word dates back to an early native practice of burying the dead. Literally it means: "Put your head toward the setting sun."

++++++

In 1526 Diago da Rocha 'discovered' the islands. In 1731 the Spaniards tried to Christianize and colonize Ulithi. The missionaries were driven completely off the islands. Two Jesuit fathers had established a small mission on Falalop along with a lay colony. One of the priests left the islet to go to the Marianas for supplies. On his return he found the other priest slain and the lay colony massacred. Later visitors met with a more cordial reception.

++++++

In the 19th century the whaling industry which ranged from Ulithi to the Bonin Islands, brought white men into contact with the natives. This contact brought guns and whisky. It also brought disease--venereal and small pox, mumps, measles and whooping cough. These sicknesses were devastating to the natives and because of them almost two-thirds of the native population died during the 19th century.

++++++

Ulithi was first attacked by the United States on March 30 and April 1, 1944. Carrier-based planes made the attack. On July 24-27 another air attack was made with a third strike on September 5-6-7.

The atoll was invaded, un-opposed, on September 20 and 21, 1944 by units of the 81st Wildcat division. A few days later the islands of Fais and Ngulu were captured. All the other islands, including Truk, were by-passed.

++++++

During the American use of the atoll the islets were used as follows: Falalop was the

home of Marine Air Group-45, planes which protected the fleet while at anchorage. It also carried out raids against nearby Japanese strongholds such as Yap. Asor was the home to the Atoll Commander and his staff. Sorlen was the home to Standard Landing Craft Unit-34. This unit had 400 small boats which serviced the fleet. Mogmog was the recreation islet where sea-weary crews could relax, have a couple of beers, engage in sports, swim and sun-bath on the beach. On Christmas day, 1944, **Admiral Chester W. Nimitz**, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet spent the day with his men on this islet. During this time, 1944-1945, the natives of Ulithi lived on Fassarai with a minimum of disturbance from outsiders.

### **ADM. CHESTER W. NIMITZ**



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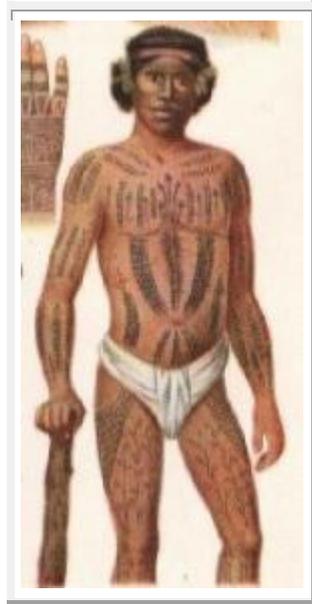
Ulithians have been very democratic. Their King was selected by vote and for life. He would have been considered the wisest (not necessarily the oldest) of the Ulithian males. When the king is dying he nominated his successor and that selection was usually honored. In 1944-45 the king was King Ueg. He was a charming person in his mid-forties. He was paralytic having had polio some years before. He ruled his people wisely and justly. He was a warm friend to the American servicemen. Each islet had its own chief. On Falalop it was Chief Ken. Chief Halen was chief of Asor and the chief of Fassarai was Chief Maho. Chief Maho had served on merchant vessels during his youth and his impressive tattoos were acquired in Hong Kong. Marine aviators flew him over some of the nearby islands. He enjoyed that very much. Prior to accepting Christianity the natives believed in totems as the origin of the world. The taro plant supposedly gave birth to the first Ulithian. Very few, if any, Ulithians now believe in the totemic origin of the world.

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Clothing on Ulithi was quite simple. The men wore breechcloths wrapped around the groin. The women wore single skirts, the material of which was woven from banana fiber. The men's breechcloth was often black and white accomplished by interplaiting bleached pandanus and black hibiscus fibers. Many developed the habit of wearing a 'hoe' or 'G' string. The method of its staying in place was only known to a Ulithian. Girls would wear a grass skirt until puberty, after which she would wear a wrap-around which reached from the waist to the knees. It was woven from banana fiber. Morals on Ulithi were of the best. There was no indecency. It was up to the woman to uphold the morals of the community. A male would never suffer reproach. Men, at one time, wore a 'lei-wreath' called a 'maram'. Long, thin bamboo combs were also worn, mostly to hold up many inches of heavy hair. Tattooing was another method of body adornment. It was highly developed on Mogmog, the local artist being considered the foremost in all the Carolines. Many of the nobility from Yap came to Ulithi to receive their tattoos. In 1922 the Japanese forbade further tattooing except for identification. Two other items of apparel were the pocket-book and a hatchet called a 'putch-a-gul'.

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### CAROLINIAN WITH TATTOOING



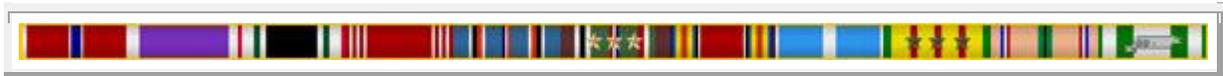
A typical Caroline Islands tattooed person from an era long since passed.



### JAPANESE SURRENDER - 1945



Official US Navy photo showing the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay aboard the USS Missouri, August 1945.



Here I am in September 1952 with my daughter Karen. I had been recalled during the Korean War and was stationed in Norfolk, VA. This picture was taken at the Enlisted Men's Club at the Receiving Station, Norfolk Naval Base.





ULITHI WEATHER DATA



**USS MASSACHUSETTS at Ulithi, Nov. 1944**



"If we go by sea  
Water will cover our corpses,  
If through the mountains,  
Grass will grow from our bones.  
We will die beside our lord  
With never a look back"

(Verse by Yakamochi Otomo (from the poem celebrating the imperial edict on the discovery of gold in Michinoku province,749 AD.) Translation by Paula Doe (A Walbler's Song in the Dark,Berkeley,Los Angeles,London,1982.)

- [TYPOON AT YAP & ULITHI](#)



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**Thanks for visiting. Hope you enjoyed your stay.**





Kingston, MA



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