



Navy enlistment picture 1944

WAR HERO

JAMES THOMAS MUNN

aka Jim or Tommy

WORLD WAR II



JAMES THOMAS MUNN (AKA JIM OR TOMMY) WWII HISTORY.

While World War II was raging, Jim was living in Parker, Arizona with his parents. At age of 17 and still a Sophomore in High School, he signed up for the Navy and was shipped off to San Diego in 1944 for basic training. At 6 foot 2 inches he was big for his age. When I was a little kid we visited Jim's Mom, Edna, she always called him Tommy. I thought she was just crazy, I never knew anybody called him that. I learned later...

After training he was assigned to the Taffy III task force on the small aircraft carrier, the USS FANSHAW BAY CVE- 70, as a DRW, (Damage Repair- Wood) 3rd Class. They called the taskforce the "Tin Can Sailors", because the ships were built fast, cheap and with very thin hulls. The Japanese shells would go completely through the ship's hull. In one side and out the other.

He helped load ammo into a 4- inch gun until the ship got damaged. Then he was off to put out the fires and repair the ship. He was injured two times and was on a hospital ship till he recovered from a concussion and then once when he was knocked down while carrying a 4-inch shell to load, sustaining a hernia and pulling muscles in his leg and shrapnel. On one occasion he was assisting a welder in a ship repair when the welder did not inform him of his intention to start up the torch. Just as he lit it up Jim did not have his glass goggles on and was looking right where it lit and was momentarily blinded. He had light sensitivity to his eyes all the rest of his life. After the war he was discharged in 1946.

Jim settled in Monterey California with his best friend, Bill Jackson. Together they worked for a tree company called Davies tree service. Mostly they pruned palm trees. Some of which were 70-80 feet in the air. This work was for PG&E.

He later reenlisted in the Naval Reserves for 4 years in 1954. As far as I can gather, he was in several battles and may have been in the Battle of Leyte



Jim's enlistment picture 1944

Gulf. When I was looking for more information on Jim, something happened in 2012. I was working in California and my coworkers talked me into going to breakfast with them at Denny's. Sitting in the first stall near the door was an old man with a Navy hat on that said, USS FANSHAW BAY. I said to him, "My dad was on that ship", he said, "What was his name?" I said, "James T. Munn" and he said, "Oh, Tommy." I was floored. No one knew that nickname he had when he was young. We chatted and he said

he would send me some stuff concerning the ship. This old man was visiting his kids for the weekend and lived in Lake Havasu City, Arizona. What's the chance? All I could say was, "Wow. God is in charge."

Jim rarely talked about the war. I think it was because of war time concussions and alcohol consumption till he got religion in 1957. He did say the ship would go up on a crest of a giant wave and then go down into a bowl of ocean so far down, you lost the view of the horizon and then back up again. Most of the war story was told by Jim's wife Patricia from what he told her when they were younger. Jim died in 1989 from lung cancer; he was only 62.



Jim & his friend Bill 1947 tree hanging



Jim at 10-12 years old



Jim's enlistment picture 1944

