

Battle of Brandon Bay
Video Notes
May 1, 2011

Battle of Brandon Bay was the last major pitched surface gun battle in US Navy history.

The battle began about 8:30pm (in the dark) with the 3 destroyers going to GQ and making their run for the beach. By 9:30pm the battle was over and the crew began preparing for the night's next surface strikes.

The 2 part video took almost 2 months to make.

Copyright free photos of destroyers during the Vietnam War are limited and fewer yet of any ships in night battle. Many of the photos used in the video are from WWII and a few from Korea.

A Vietnam era destroyer underway in battle is beyond my capabilities to convey in a video. The ship is moving up and down, rolling left and right with the waves. Everything is vibrating at 30+ knots. The steam driven engineering plants whine up and down with the changing load. The gun mount hydraulic systems growl to keep the gun barrels on target, the ammunition hoists rattle as shells travel from the magazine below up to the gun mount above, the ship shakes as the gun fires ejecting the empty shell casing out onto the deck to roll around. Exploding enemy shells sound like someone beating on the hull with a sledgehammer to those inside.

The photo in Part 1 of an officer reading a newspaper on an upper level is Arleigh Burke in WWII. The current class of DDG destroyers are named in his honor.

The photo of the destroyer showing it's fantail to the enemy with 3 shells hitting nearby is from the Morton 1967 cruise book. Thanks to Terry Jelcick for the photo, saved me having to dig out my cruise book and rescan.

That's me in the white hat cutting in the boiler (USS Morton, Forward Fire Room, 1967).

Everything above the main deck on destroyers like Turner Joy is aluminum.

Turner Joy was the last all gun destroyer built, missiles replaced guns on newer destroyers.

Turner Joy's three 5 inch guns could shoot 12 miles, her twin mount 3 inch guns could shoot 8 miles.

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USS Morton (DD-948) 1966-69
USS Turner Joy (DD-951) 1970
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