

With grateful thanks to Al LeGault for raising the issue of Turner Joy sailors' possible exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War, Roger Tetrault's good memory, and Bob McLean's obtaining of the pertinent Deck Logs for the 18th of December 1966, we have arrived at a moment of truth. The BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION has been working tirelessly to bring the Agent Orange issue to a beneficial conclusion for some time and now. Its Executive Director -- JOHN PAUL ROSSIE -- has volunteered to nominate Turner Joy for inclusion in the list of Blue Water ships that "temporarily operated in Vietnamese inland waters" therefore making her sailors' "eligible for the presumption of herbicide exposure." as a consequence. JOHN ROSSIE suggests that the Turner Joy Reunion Group make the widest dissemination of this fact of nomination and that anyone of the crewmembers who has any one of the presumptive diseases begins applying to the Department of Veterans Affairs now. Should such a request for VA medical treatment and/or compensation be denied, he, JOHN, should be notified and he will take up the case through his access to the Department.

Now for some details.

1. The email address for the Association is bluewaternavy.org This is the heart of the current effort to settle the Agent Orange issue and deserves our dedicated support.

2. JOHN PAUL ROSSIE's email address is johnr@rossie.com or navy@bluewaternavy.org. He is a one man navy for the good of our sailors

3. For details regarding the Agent Orange panoply of information regarding the blue water issue, Google " Agent Orange," or "Agent Orange Presumptive Conditions," or "Blue Water Navy" for access to the Association and many other avenues of information and assistance.

4. For a listing of "Presumptive Agent Orange diseases" -- Google "Veterans Diseases Associated with Agent Orange Exposure." Some examples are Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2), Hodgkins Disease, Ischemic Heart disease, Prostate cancer.

5. Newly added presumptive diseases are -- Parkinson's. all chronic B cell leukemia, Hairy Cell Leukemia

6. Children of veterans exposed having Spinal Bifida are eligible for assistance.

7. Filing for a claim should be accomplished at the Regional VA Office. If a claim previously filed was denied, "re-open the claim based on new and material evidence."

With the final acknowledgement that Turner Joy is properly on the Blue Water Ship List our sailors will be eligible " to be granted service-connection for all the diseases listed by the DVA as being caused by exposure to herbicides while within the boundaries of Vietnam by way of service on inland waters." In looking at the location of the Baie de Van Fong where Turner Joy conducted a shore bombardment mission on 18 December 1966, the bay where we operated is clearly within the definition of inland waters and within the boundaries of the Agent Orange drop area north of Nha Trang. We were there from about 0800 to 1600 that day.

One last thought. It may well be that there are other skippers may recall taking Turner Joy into Vietnam's inland waters during their deployments and wish to document that fact so that their crewmembers are eligible for treatment and compensation should they be saddled with presumptive diseases from herbicides. The time period extends from 1962 to 1975

Would it be possible for you to include the information above in the next newsletter and perhaps in the Turner Joy website?

With all best wishes, Ed Briggs