

“Chief Running Nose”

We were trying to get around Pt. Barrow, AK in early Sept. 1955; but the wind had shifted and set the ice peak southeast onto Pt. Barrow. We had no ice breakers with us, so we were not able to get around the point. But there was some open water around the large pieces of ice. One of the civilian freighters did not unload all its 55 gal. drums of oil at his designated area. So, it was decided that its oil would be unloaded at the northern point (about 5 miles from Pt. Barrow). Out of all the ships “frozen in” I was the only one that held a 3rd mate’s license and was now in the U.S. Navy. Using a “Mike boat” and a couple LCVP’s (landing craft) we proceeded unloading the freighter onto the point where 12 to 16 eskimos would roll the barrels up the bank to higher ground. The chief-in-charge we nick-named “Chief Running Nose” (but did not call him that to his face).

Everything went well for a few days but the ice pack was getting more difficult. One morning the Chief called me aside and pulled out this bag hanging from his neck. With hand jesters, he indicated we were good friends and pulled out an eye from the bag and gave it to me. Then he pulled out another and popped it into his mouth with a big smile on his face. Then he motioned to me to do the same. After looking at the eye (about the size of a 5 cent piece), I popped it into my mouth and quickly swallowed it whole. I think it’s still there looking up at me saying you should have thought of a better name for the Chief! Oh yes, the Chief said it was a walrus eye!!!

-- Flying Moor --

I was XO on board the USS O’Hare (DD-889) out of Norfolk, VA assigned to DESRON-32 in Task Group Alpha. There is a Task Group Alpha and Bravo. One of the Task Groups was always at sea hunting Russian subs off the East Coast of the U.S. DD’s fuel every three days when operating as they should never get 75% below fuel onboard. DD’s have to be ready to go anywhere anytime.

Our Captain was a master at ship handling and one of the few I ever sailed with who could do a Flying Moor. When fueling at sea, which is usually done at about 12 kts; there is a DD alongside the oiler and the next DD to fuel is 1500 yds astern in the “lifeguard” station. When the ship fueling is finished she usually puts the helm over 20 degrees, and breaks away at flank speed to return to her new station in the screen to protect the oiler and carrier. At that moment in time, the DD in lifeguard station goes to all ahead flank speed. As soon as the bow of the DD goes by the stern of the oiler, the DD goes to all back full. When she is alongside the oiler, in her fueling station, the next order to the engine room is all ahead two thirds, which is 12 kts, and starts receiving fuel. But if it’s not done perfectly it’s very embarrassing. It’s called a “flying moor”.