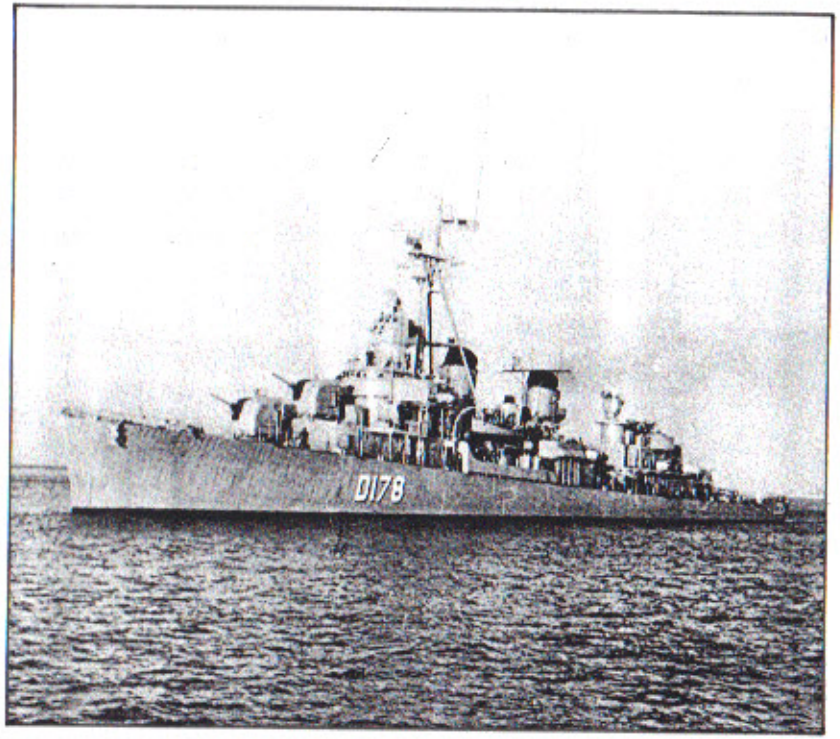
## 3. Division (Engineering) Cont'd

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gefr. | Volkert Bock | Matr. | Heinz Pomper |
| Gefr. | Reinhold Boeck | Gefr. | Achim Rive |
| Gefr. | Udo Brandt | Gefr. | Kurt Rossner |
| Gefr. | Wilhelm Brendel | Gefr. | Albert Rybczak |
| Gefr. | Juergen Buhre | Gefr. | Wilhelm Schmelzle |
| Gefr. | Guenter Buescher | Matr. | Klaas Dieter Schmidt |
| Gefr. | Egon Doering | Gefr. | Herbert Schroeder |
| Gefr. | Heinz Gunter Eichner | Matr. | Erich Sperber |
| Gefr. | Willi Eisele | Matr. | Lothar Thielmann |
| Gefr. | Joachim Feifar | Matr. | Gerhard Treptow |
| Gefr. | Udo Fischer | Gefr. | Wolfgang Warzyceck |
| Gefr. | Johannes Giebelmann | Matr. | Peter Wissmann |

*PROGRAM*




# TRANSFER OF U. S. DESTROYER CLAXTON (ex-DD-571)

to

# FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

as

# ZERSTOERER 4 (D-178)

■

Pier A, United States Naval Base
Charleston, South Carolina

15 DECEMBER 1959

# USS CLAXTON FACTS

★

BUILT BY

CONSOLIDATED STEEL CORPORATION

ORANGE, TEXAS

★

LAUNCHED

1 APRIL 1942

★

SPONSOR

MRS. ALVA D. BERNHARD

★

COMMISSIONED

8 DECEMBER 1942

★

OVERALL LENGTH

376 FEET

★

BEAM

39 FEET

★

DISPLACEMENT

2,050 TONS

★

SPEED

35 KNOTS

## 2. Division (Operations)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ob. Btsm. | Heinz Richter | Gefr. | Dietrich Boehme |
| Btsm. | Friedrich Karl Breuer | Gefr. | Klaus Dittrich |
| Btsm. | Bernhard Kramer | Gefr. | Gerald Eichleiter |
| Btsm. | Johannes Kuntzmann | Gefr. | Helmut Fassbender |
| Maat | Dieter Altenhoevel | Gefr. | Eberhard Fischer |
| Maat | Klaus Becker | Gefr. | Werner Gese |
| Maat | Peter Claussen | Ob. Gefr. | Helmut Grieser |
| Ob. Maat | August Czaia | Hpt. Gefr. | Karl Hellwig |
| Maat | Hans Dietrich Eckardt | Gefr. | Ufko van Hettinga |
| Maat | Werner Felgentraeger | Gefr. | Norbet Iden |
| Maat | Hans Froehlich | Gefr. | Dieter Isaakson |
| Maat | Hans Joachim Graebner | Gefr. | Peter Helmut Juch |
| Ob. Maat | Gunter Hoehn | Ob. Gefr. | Werner Kachel |
| Maat | Horst Kuhlins | Gefr. | Johann Kehl |
| Maat | Reimer Mederake | Gefr. | Reiner Kluth |
| Maat | August Metge | Gefr. | Eustachius Kotschenreuther |
| Maat | Georg Muschik | Gefr. | Peter Krueckel |
| Ob. Maat | Horst Paulat | Gefr. | Reinhard Langer |
| Maat | Helmut Radke | Gefr. | Andreas Linn |
| Maat | Friedrich Reinmann | Gefr. | Wilfried Martin |
| Ob. Maat | Wolfgang Sahre | Hpt. Gefr. | Stefan Moelle |
| Ob. Maat | Harry Sielaff | Gefr. | Karl Gerd Niebergall |
| Maat | Hans Stotzem | Gefr. | Rolf Ricke |
| Maat | Dieter Schnoor | Gefr. | Ronald Schulze |
| Maat | Werner Schuett | Gefr. | Wilhelm Sprung |
| Maat | Horst Schura | Gefr. | Uwe Uelzen |
| Maat | Rolf Tatka | Gefr. | Manfred Wenzel |
| Maat | Guenter Utermoehlen | Gefr. | Werner Witte |
| Ob. Gefr. | Manfred Althaus | Gefr. | Kurt Zaengel |
| Gefr. | Manfred Bachmaier | Gefr. | Walter Zimmermann |

## 3. Division (Engineering)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hpt. Btsm. | Alfons Koerner | Gefr. | Heinz Greule |
| Ob. Btsm. | Herbert Koch | Gefr. | Hans Joerg Grundmann |
| Ob. Btsm. | Heinrich Schlick | Matr. | Guenter Hahn |
| Ob. Btsm. | Artur Walloch | Gefr. | Siegfried Hanelt |
| Btsm. | Heinrich Manzenrieder | Gefr. | Thassilo Hausmann |
| Maat | August Benkel | Gefr. | Klaus Herrmann |
| Maat | Kurt Brandtner | Gefr. | Helmut Herter |
| Maat | Lothar Freiwald | Gefr. | Klaus Hidde |
| Maat | Hugo Friedrichsen | Gefr. | Adalbert Hoffmann |
| Ob. Maat | Wilhelm Goebl | Gefr. | Jens Holland |
| Maat | Juergen Habicht | Gefr. | Dieter Hustedt |
| Maat | Joerg Helfers | Gefr. | Dieter Koch |
| Maat | Horst Jaehnke | Gefr. | Georg Koelsch |
| Maat | Wolgang Lemke | Gefr. | Wolfgang Koesler |
| Maat | Wolgang Lunau | Matr. | Wilhelm Krueger |
| Maat | Hans Luelsdorf | Gefr. | Horst Kruse |
| Maat | Winfried Maurer | Gefr. | Hans Josef Kwidzinski |
| Maat | Alfred Oelsner | Gefr. | Peter Lange |
| Maat | Volkert Petersen | Gefr. | Peter Leins |
| Ob. Maat | Manfred Pipke | Gefr. | Guenter Meiland |
| Maat | Uwe Pohlmann | Gefr. | Karl Heinz Meissner |
| Maat | Siegfried Alber | Gefr. | Frithjof Mueller |
| Gefr. | Rudolf Arnold | Gefr. | Gisbert Niehueser |
| Gefr. | Hans Georg Baldermann | Matr. | Hans Juergen Rohlmann |

## Commanding Officer

FREGATTENKAPITAN HANS WALTER BUCH, who today assumes command of Zerstoerer 4 (ex-USS CLAXTON) was graduated from the German Naval Academy in 1936. From 1937 to 1946 he served in destroyer escorts and destroyers, usually as gunnery officer or executive officer. He was commanding officer of the destroyer escorts T-30 and T-35. His first command was sunk by mines in the Bay of Leningrad, and Cdr. Buch spent eight hours in the water before being rescued.



For his wartime duties Cdr. Buch was awarded the German Cross (Gold), the Iron Cross, first and second class, the Destroyer Medal and seven other decorations.

Born in Biebrich, he was assigned to the German Ministry of Defense in Bonn before being ordered to command the Z-4. His present home address is Hamburg.

*

## Executive Officer

KORVETTENKAPITAN SIEGRIED THIEL, Executive officer of Zerstoerer 4 was graduated from the German Naval Academy in 1939. During World War II he served in destroyers as plotting room officer, and later commanded a patrol boat in the English Channel.



For his wartime service Lcdr. Thiel was awarded the German Cross (Gold), Iron Cross,, first and second class, and four other decorations.

Born in Koblenz/Rhein, he was a squadron-leader at the anti-submarine warfare school in Flensburg before receiving orders to the Z-4. His home address is Flensburg.

CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

30 November 1959

My dear Commander Buch:

On the occasion of the transfer of USS CLAXTON (DD-571) from the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany, and her commissioning in your Navy as the ZERSTORER FOUR, the officers and men of the United States Navy join me in sincere best wishes to you and the entire ship's company.

ZERSTORER FOUR, in her role as an active unit of the Federal German Navy, will further add to the ability of the Navies of the Free World to exercise flexible, mobile destroyer striking power in the control of the seas, which is so vital to our common defense. The effective employment of your ship will entail a high degree of seamanship, engineering and operational skill, qualities which have been bravely and brilliantly demonstrated by the German Navy in the past. Should it become necessary for you to lead your ship in the face of mortal opposition, I am sure that you and your crew will act in the highest tradition of the Federal Republic of Germany.

May you enjoy fair winds and favorable land falls in the many tasks that lie ahead.

Sincerely,

Arleigh Burke

ARLEIGH BURKE

Commander Walter Buch, FGN
Commanding Officer, ZERSTORER FOUR (D173)
c/o Commandant SIXTH Naval District
Charleston, South Carolina

# TRANSFER OF THE U. S. DESTROYER CLAXTON (ex-DD-571) to the FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY 15 DECEMBER 1959

★

## *Transfer Ceremony*

Band Selections ..... Sixth Naval District Band

Invocation ..... Chaplain Dickman

Introduction of honored guests ..... Captain C. T. Mauro
Chief of Staff, Sixth Naval District

Remarks ..... Congressman L. Mendel Rivers

Remarks ..... Captain R. B. Madden
Commander, Charleston Naval Shipyard

Remarks and introduction of
Adm. Johannesson ..... Rear Admiral K. M. McManes
Commandant, Sixth Naval District

Remarks ..... Rear Admiral Rolf Johannesson, FGN
Commander Naval Forces, Federal German Navy

"Haul down the colors"
National Anthem ..... Sixth Naval District Band

Execution of transfer papers ..... Rear Admiral Johannesson

Presentation of letter from
Chief of Naval Operations ..... Rear Admiral K. M. McManes

Presentation of Holy Bible ..... Chaplain Dickman

## *Commissioning Ceremony*

Rear Admiral Johannesson orders Commander Hans Walter Buch, Commanding Officer, to place the Z-4 in commission.

Commander Buch complies and requests permission to address the guests and his crew.

Commander Buch addresses guests (in English) and his crew (in German.) Upon completion, Commander Buch announces that he will now place the Z-4 in commission by order of the Minister of Defense.

Commander Buch directs his Executive Officer to "Set the Watch." After the watch is set, the remainder of the crew, followed by Commander Buch, board the ship.

Commander Buch directs that the German Ensign be broken.

"Attention" sounded by bugler.

The German National Anthem is played while the German Ensign is hoisted on Z-4.

Commander Buch reports to Rear Admiral Johannesson that the Z-4 is now in commission.

Benediction by Chaplain Dickman.

Commander Buch escorts official party on board ship for inspection.

# Besatzungsliste der auf Zerstoerer "Z4" kommandierten Soldaten

## 1. Division (Deck Dept)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hpt. Btsm. | Bernhard Weidner | Hpt. Gefr. | Guenter Kairies |
| Ob. Btsm. | Werner Czerwonka | Gefr. | Claus Kehding |
| Btsm. | Klaus Bodersen | Gefr. | Hans Joachim King |
| Btsm. | Fritz Krauss | Gefr. | Manred Kirschenmann |
| Maat | Horst Bleckmann | Gefr. | Helmut Kloke |
| Maat | Gerd Brandt | Gefr. | Klaus Peter Klose |
| Maat | Guenter Gaedecke | Gefr. | Wolfgang Koenig |
| Maat | Erwin Guhse | Gefr. | Rudolf Konrad |
| Maat | Udo Igelbrink | Gefr. | Hans Krueger |
| Maat | Reinhold Kaub | Gefr. | Josef Kurz |
| Maat | Rolf Killan | Matr. | Klaus Lange |
| Maat | Guenter Klautmann | Gefr. | Horst Lerche |
| Ob. Maat | Siegfried Kolb | Ob. Gefr. | Walter Massat |
| Maat | Peter Moedel | Gefr. | Axel Matern |
| Maat | Friedrich Moll | Gefr. | Bernhard Meisehen |
| Maat | Hans Georg Raapke | Gefr. | Klaus Meinhard |
| Ob. Maat | Bernhard Rohde | Gefr. | Friedhelm Mohr |
| Maat | Fritz Sander | Gefr. | Josef Mueller |
| Maat | Kurt Schoenemann | Gefr. | Manfred Mueller |
| Maat | Berno Wiedemann | Gefr. | Klaus Niebergall |
| Maat | Manfred Zielich | Gefr. | Dieter Nottrodt |
| Ob. Gefr. UA | Alwin Gemuend | Gefr. | Ottokar Ott |
| Hpt. Gefr. | Hans Dieter Adam | Gefr. | Friedrich Pelzer |
| Gefr. | Jakob Altenhof | Ob. Gefr. | Dieter Petereit |
| Gefr. | Rolf Reinhard Asmushen | Gefr. | Karl Friedrich Petig |
| Gefr. | Herbert Bach | Ob. Gefr. | Joachim Pirch |
| Gefr. | Kurt Bartels | Ob. Gefr. | Guenter Pulkenat |
| Gefr. | Gerhard Barth | Ob. Gefr. | Klaus Reuter |
| Matr. | Egbert Behrens | Gefr. | Heinz Sader |
| Gefr. | Wilfried Bergmann | Hpt. Gefr. | Horst Sauermann |
| Matr. | Friedhelm Berlitz | Gefr. | Helmut Schaefer |
| Ob. Gefr. | Klaus Boeck | Gefr. | Lothar Schenk |
| Gefr. | Friedhelm Boettner | Gefr. | Jurgen Schenk |
| Matr. | Alfred Bopf | Gefr. | Helmut Schenke |
| Gefr. | Wolgang Brockmann | Gefr. | Harald Schindel |
| Matr. | Klaus Peter Buhmann | Gefr. | Peter Schloesser |
| Matr. | Wilhelm Chmilarek | Gefr. | Peter Schwarting |
| Gefr. | Max Dammalacks | Gefr. | Alois Seemann |
| Gefr. | Albert Drochner | Gefr. | Karl Siemer |
| Gefr. | Ulrich Duewel | Gefr. | Peter Stegen |
| Gefr. | Heiko Eschrich | Gefr. | Hans Joerg Stephan |
| Gefr. | Udo Faust | Gefr. | Guenter Telkemeyer |
| Matr. | Herbert Fischer | Gefr. | Heinz Peter Terhorst |
| Gefr. | Gerd Franke | Gefr. | Siegfried Vetter |
| Ob. Gefr. | Horst Franke | Gefr. | Hubert Weiss |
| Gefr. | Juergen Freiberg | Ob. Gefr. | Heinz Wesselmann |
| Gefr. | August Geldmacher | Gefr. | Wolf Ruediger Wieczorek |
| Gefr. | Dietrich Gnass | Ob. Gefr. | Wolfgang Wulff |
| Gefr. | Franz Goellinger | Gefr. | Werner Zeltzem |
| Gefr. | Ludwig Goetz | Gefr. | Gerd Zink |
| Gefr. | Guenter Hass | | |

# History of the USS CLAXTON (DD-571)

• • • •

The USS CLAXTON, a member of Captain Arleigh A. Burke's famed "Little Beavers" of Destroyer Squadron 23, earned the Presidential Unit Citation and eight battle stars for her combat record in as many major campaigns.

She fought at Empress Augusta Bay and Cape St. George, Bougainville; in the consolidation of the Southern Solomons; the assault and occupation of the Western Carolines; the assault and landings at Leyte, Luzon, and Manila Bay; the consolidation of the southern Philippines; and in the assault on Okinawa.

Claxton was named for Midshipman Thomas Claxton who was mortally wounded in the Battle of Lake Eerie, September 10, 1813 and died at Erie, Pennsylvania, October 17, 1813. A sword was awarded by Congress to his nearest male relative in recognition of his gallant conduct.

After her comissioning CLAXTON arrived at Casco Bay, Maine, March 14, 1943, and reported to Task Group 22.2, awaiting the sortie of the German battleship VON TIRPITZ from Norwegian waters. She returned to New York March 27 and made one convoy trip to Casablanca (April 1-May 9) before departing Charleston, South Carolina, May 17, 1943 to join the Pacific fleet.

After a period of training at Noumea and Espiritu Santo (June 12-August 8) and covering the Rendova-New Georgia landings (June 27-July 25), CLAXTON joined Destroyer Division 45, Squadron 23 in command of Captain Arleigh A. Burke, and commenced "running the Slot" to intercept any Japanese shipping attempting to reinforce or evacuate troops in the face of the Allied invasion. From October 31, 1943 to February 4, 1944 the Squadron earned the sobriquest "Little Beavers", as well as a Presidential Unit Citation, participating in the consolidation of the northern Solomons; bombardments of Buka-Bonis airfields (October 31-November 2, November 17, and December 24) and Shortland Islands (November 1-2); Battle of Empress Augusta Bay (November 10-13, 16); Battle off Cape St. George (November 24-25); and support of air actions off Treasury-Bougainville Islands (February 3-4, 1944).

Two of these actions deserve special mention. During the Battle of Empress Augusta Bay CLAXTON with Destroyer Division 45 delivered a torpedo attack on the flank of a Japanese task force attempting to break up the U. S. landings on Bougainville, then took the disabled FOOTE in tow to Purvis Bay, arriving November 4. The action north west of Buke airfield on the night of November 24-25 (later named the

# History of the USS CLAXTON (DD-571)

• • • •

Battle off Cape St. George) saw CLAXTON as a part of Destroyer Squadron 23 foil the attempt of five Japanese destroyers to evacuate valuable aviation personnel to Rabaul. In a surprise torpedo attack and running gun battle, ONAMI, MAKINAMI, and YUGIRI were sunk and one other destroyer damaged without a single casualty to the gallant "Little Beavers".

During the bombardment of Sarime Plantation, Bougainville (February 4, 1944), CLAXTON suffered an explosion aft, probably caused by the explosion of two medium caliber shells. Completing the bombardment with her three forward guns despite serious damage and 15 wounded, she reached Purvis Bay the following day for temporary repairs, then steamed to Mare Island Navy Yard, arriving March 10 for permanent repairs and a well-deserved rest.

CLAXTON returned to Port Purvis August 24, 1944, and resumed screening and fire support duties in the invasion of the southern Palaus (September 8-October 1); and Leyte Landings (October 18-31) including the Battle of Surigao Strait (October 24-25). On patrol in Leyte Gulf (November 1) CLAXTON suffered serious damage and five dead, 23 wounded when a Japanese suicide plane crashed and exploded in the water on the starboard side flooding all the living spaces.. Attempting to aid the suicided ABNER READ, CLAXTON was driven off by exploding ammunition but rescued 187 survivors before anchoring off Tacloban for emergency repairs.

After further repairs at Manus, Admiralty Islands (November 15-December 30, 1944), CLAXTON returned to the Philippine Islands to supply fire support and patrol and escort duty in the landings at Lingayen Gulf (January 9-18, 1945); Nasugbu (January 31-February 5); Mariveles-Corregidor (February 14-28); Visayan Islands (March 18-21, March 26, April 1); and Mindanao Island (April 17-23, May 3).

Arriving at Okinawa May 16, 1945 with the newly reformed Destroyer Squadron 23, CLAXTON operated on radar picket and fighter director duty until the end of the war. She departed Okinawa September 10, transited the Panama Canal October 8, and arrived at Washington, D. C., where with the rest of the "Little Beavers", she was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation Ocober 19. Steaming to Brooklyn November 5, she commenced her pre-inactivation overhaul and was placed out of commission in reserve April 18, 1946, berthed at Charleston, South Carolina.

# Officers of ZERSTOERER 4

★

**K.Kpt. Uwe Soerensen**
**Engineering Officer**

**Mar.Ob.St. Arzt Dr. Hans-Wilhelm Birker**
**Medical Officer**

**Kptlt. Juergen von Gaza**
**Gunnery Officer**

**Kptlt. Hans-Joachim v. der Osten**
**Operations Officer**

**Kptlt. Hans-Joachim Kleffel**
**Navigator**

**Kptlt. Friedrich Lacher**
**ASW Officer**

**Kptlt. Rudolf Eisenmann**
**Supply Officer**

**Kptlt. Ludwig Stoll**
**Damage Control Officer**

**Kptlt. Wilhelm Fichtner**
**Main Propulsion Assistant**

**Oblt.z.S. Jochen Gamboeck**
**Main Battery Officer**

**Oblt.z. S. Horst Koehlert**
**CIC Officer**

**Lt. z.S. Helmut Kaehler**
**Torpedo Officer**

**Lt.z.S. Franz-Dieter Braun**
**Communications Officer**