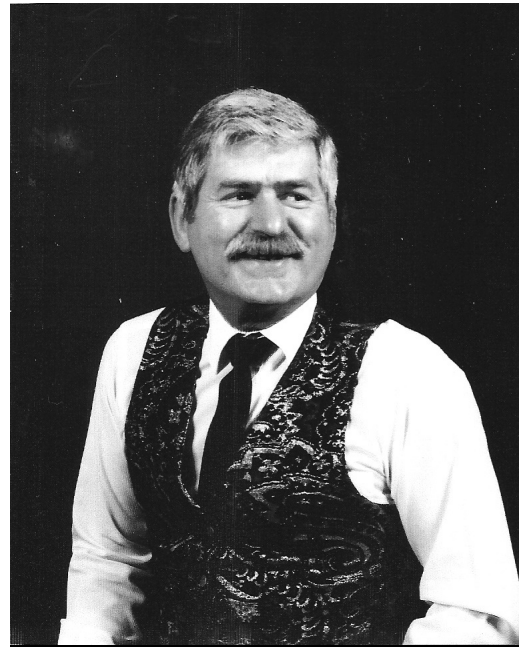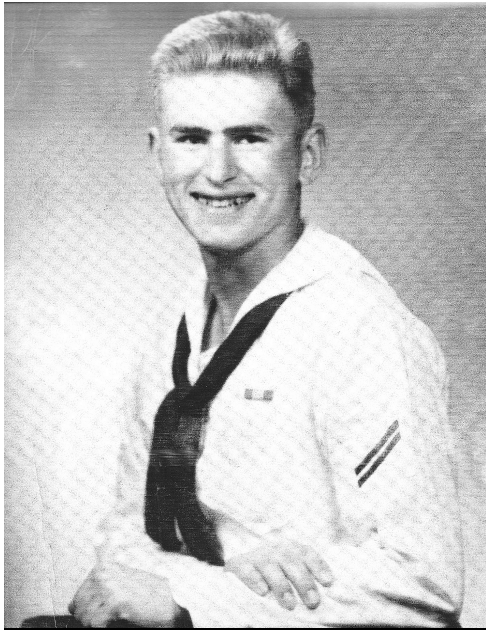MM2 THOMAS JAMES BENSON 6 February 1955-19 October 1957

Thomas James Benson was born 24 November 1936, at St. Paul, Minnesota. He had brown hair and blue eyes. Tom, sometimes called "Ben" or "Benny," went to school in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

He got mad at his mother one day in May 1954 and enlisted in the Navy at St. Paul. He went to boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois. He was there one week and became ill with German measles. He spent two weeks in sick bay before he could start his basic training.

From boot camp he went to Machinist's Mate school. On 6 February 1955, he reported on board USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754) where he served until 19 October 1957.

Crossing the Line

While aboard FRANK E. EVANS, Tom made two Westpac tours with the Seventh Fleet. He was on board 1n 1956 when FRANK E. EVANS went to Melbourne, Australia for the Olympics.

Tom was there for Operation Wig Wam when an atomic depth charge was detonated off the San Diego coast.

November 1956

When he was on watch, Tom would go see "Cookie" and get grub and cook down in the engine room. His best friend was Charles "Chuck" Heinz from South Carolina, who passed away a few years ago.

Tom's youngest son Neil graduated from Great Lakes boot camp exactly 40 years after Tom did. Tom's oldest son Tom Jr. retired from the navy after 23 years. His second son, Paul, spent 13 years in the Army.

Thomas James Benson

Tom passed away 19 October 2006, 48 years after being discharged from USS FRANK E EVANS DD-754. This photo includes items displayed at his memorial service.

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