

A Note from Tom Planes

Think I read this some where but I was reminded of the fact when leaving the cemetery of a family friend. The grave marker said Bob Smith 1940-2015 and it occurred to me the author was right we do live in the dash. No matter how long we live our total life line amounts to a dash on a marker. Some make a greater impact than others Angelo is one that did.

I have stayed in touch with Angelo Diana off and on since the first Altair reunion in Norfolk. We shared sea stories and secrets about life as an Altair sailor. I wish now I had called more often. When I think of Angelo or Ange as I called him I see him as a burley BT3 Petty officer.

A member of the Black Gang he was responsible for the operation and maintenance of the boilers that produced the steam, the very life blood of Altair. Without which the ship is dead. Ange played those boilers like a virtuoso plays a violin. He was comfortable lighting off the boilers as one would light a cigar. This was a critical procedure that could result in a fire or an explosion. Ange handled it with finesse

Even after hours of working in bone melting heat in the lower level of the engine room in heat that sometimes reached one hundred thirty degrees he would come out with a joke and that big Italian smile and say something like We didn't do much today but we will give her hell tomorrow He loves his family and is proud of his Italian heritage, When I try to come up with a word that describes Ange I come away with several Dependable, Assiduous, Capable, Shipmate, Protector and friend. I still believe miracles