

The Old Navy

Come gather round me lads and I'll tell you a thing or two,
About the way we ran the Navy in nineteen sixty two.
When wooden ships and iron men were barely out of sight;
I am going to give you some facts just to set the record right.

We wore the ol' bell bottoms, with a Dixie cup or flat hat on our head;
And we always hit the sack at night but we never "went to bed."
Our uniforms were worn ashore, and we were mighty proud;
Never thought of wearing civvies, in fact, they were not allowed.

Now, when a ship puts out to sea, I'll tell you son, it hurts;
When suddenly you notice that half the crew's wearing skirts.
And it's hard for me to imagine, a female boatswains mate;
Stopping on the Quarterdeck to make sure her stockings are straight.

What happened to the KiYi brush, and the old salt-water bath:
Holy stoning decks at night, 'cause you stirred old Bosn's wrath!
We always had our geedunk stand and lots of pogeys bait;
And it always took a hitch or two, just to make a rate.

In your sea bag, all your skivvies were neatly stopped and rolled;
The blankets on your sack had better have a three-inch fold.
Your little ditty bag, it is hard to believe, just how much it held;
You wouldn't go ashore with pants that hadn't been spiked and belled.

We had scullery maids and succotash and good old S.O.S.;
And when you felt like topping off, you headed for the mess.
Oh, we had our belly robbers, but there weren't too many gripes;
For the deck apes were never hungry and there were no starving snipes.

Now, you never hear of Davey Jones, Shellbacks or Polliwogs;
And you never splice the main brace to receive your daily grog.
Now you never have to dog a watch or stand the main event;
You even tie your lines today; back in my time they were bent.

We were all two-fisted drinkers and no one thought you sinned;
If you staggered back aboard your ship, three sheets to the wind.
And with just a couple hours of sleep you regained your usual luster;
Bright eyed and bushy tailed, you still made morning muster.

Rocks and shoals have long since gone, and now it's U.C.M.J.;
Back then, the old man handled everything if you should go astray.
Now they steer the ships with dials, and I wouldn't be surprised;
If some day they sailed the damned things from the beach computerized.

So, when my earthly hitch is over, and the good Lord picks the best,
I'll walk right up to Him and say, "Sir, I have but one request."
Let me sail the seas of Heaven in a coat of Navy blue.
Like I did so long ago on earth, way back in sixty two."