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YAGRGRAM #84 - FEBRUARY 2020

Lee Doyel, 2315 Bavarian Court, Pensacola FL 32503 (850) 433-6930

view & print this YAGRGRAM in color at <http://www.yagrs.org>

In this issue - 2020 Colorado Springs reunion registration and hotel information

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image of reunion pin

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YAGRS plaque at Mt Soledad

National Veterans Memorial

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dues form

YAGR book order form

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Reunion dates, including pre-reunion tours, are Tuesday, May 19 through Saturday, May 23, 2020.

The hotel is the:

Colorado Springs Marriott

5580 Tech Center Dr.

Colorado Springs, CO 80919

719-260-1800

Mention YAGRS. Rate code is YAGYAGA

Room rate is \$135.00 a night plus 10.25% room tax.

LAST DAY to book a room is Friday, April 3, 2020.

NOTE: This is 6 WEEKS before the reunion dates as compared to the usual 4 weeks. Booking after that at the YAGRS rate is at the hotel's discretion.

"I initially reserved 40 rooms (80 people). However subsequent registration problems developed with the hotel telling people there were no rooms available. I obtained additional rooms and now there are some rooms still available. After these are gone it is unlikely I will be able to get additional rooms at the YAGR rate. So register at the hotel ASAP. If you have trouble registering and are informed there are no rooms available, Call Brian Forrester (480-332-7294) who can help resolve the problem."

You can reserve a room by phone or by the internet. The internet link was previously sent to the ships coordinators for distribution. If you did not receive it check with me or your ships coordinator.

Although there is no registration or tour fees, a registration form needs to be filled out so we can make out name tags, tour numbers, etc.



Airport Information

Colorado Springs Airport (COS) - 16 miles from hotel. Hotel does not provide shuttle service. Taxi fare is approximately \$50 one way.

Denver International Airport (DEN) - 81 miles from hotel. Various means of transport (limo, bus, sedan etc.) to the hotel can be found online.

Tours

Pre-reunion tours: Tues. May19 - dinner theater

Wed. May 20 - Pikes Peak

Reunion tour: Fri. May 21 - Royal Gorge Train

from Lee Doyel - It would be nice to have 100 or more at the Colorado Springs reunion. We are more than half way there. As of 21 February we have 91 signed up for the dinner theater, 90 for Pikes Pike, and 97 for the Gorge Train. So make you hotel reservation and fill out the registration form and send to Ray Ostrowski, 123 Barbara Dr, Newburg, NY 12555.

We will have a guest speaker from NORAD for 20 to 30 minutes at the Saturday night banquet.

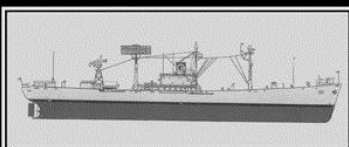
memo from Lee Doyel

At past reunions I have mentioned my efforts of spreading the word and history of our Cold War contribution which has included sending copies of our book to museums, libraries, etc. The latest is that I have had an all weather plaque made to be placed at the Mt Soledad National Veterans Memorial located at Pt. Loma, San Diego, CA. It will be placed among numerous plaques honoring various individuals, ships and commands. Plaques of Bob Hope, Gen. Patton, Audie, Murphy, Jimmy Stewart, and other notables are there. They have a very good web site. Check it out. You will see the memorial and pictures of various plaques and where they are located. Individuals can have a plaque made of a veteran and installed. The web site (soledadmemorial.com) gives details. Plaques come in various sizes. Ours is the largest, 8" x16." Due to size limitations I had to reduce the description to fewer words that would fit and be readable.

YAGRS ASSOCIATION



USS GUARDIAN AGR-1
USS LOOKOUT AGR-2
USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3
USS SEARCHER AGR-4
USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9
USS OUTPOST AGR-10
USS PROTECTOR AGR-11
USS VIGIL-12
YR-23 YR-65

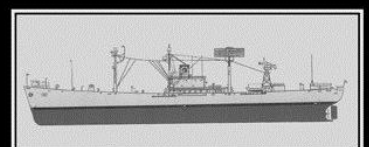


SIXTEEN SHIPS THAT SERVED AS
RADAR PICKET SHIPS DURING THE COLD WAR
1955 to 1965

There were 8 ships on each coast and served as the seaward extension of the Distant Early Warning System (DEW line) of North America. They were converted WWII Liberty cargo ships equipped with the latest electronic and radar equipment. The ships were controlled by and reported to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD).



USS SCANNER AGR-5
USS LOCATOR AGR-6
USS PICKET AGR-7
USS INTERCEPTOR AGR 8
USS INTERDICTOR AGR 13
USS INTERPRETER AGR 14
USS TRACER AGR-15
USS WATCHMAN-16



Hello YAGRS Ladies!

It will soon be time for us to start packing and off to Colorado Springs!!! We have an anonymous donor this year who is generously paying for most of our expenses. How wonderful of this person to do be so kind!

So down to business of the activities of our women's breakfast. I'll number them to make it easier to read.

1. Please remember to bring a small unwrapped inexpensive gift for our penny auction. Some of the ladies did not win anything at the New Orleans reunion. It would be nice if every lady who brought a gift, went home with a gift. In the past most of the ladies who won more than one gift, graciously relinquished her extra gift to someone who had not won. This has always been a sweet gesture. It is all for fun anyway, and I want to try to see that everyone is happy!

2. It has been our custom for a few years now, to take up a collection at our breakfast for a local cause that benefits veterans. For those of you who like to shop, the items most requested are socks, boxer briefs, hooded sweat-shirts, tee-shirts. lounge pants (NO USED or pre-worn items can be accepted), toiletries, small denomination gift cards (\$20 or less) for places like Walmart, Target, McDonalds, etc. For those who choose to write a check, the information as to who to make the check out to, will be in the information packet when you register on Thursday. I will work on getting a veterans organization who will come to the breakfast to pick up the donations.

3. Of course monetary donations are always welcome. We will have someone collecting and keeping an accounting of the money. After everything is verified, I will write a check to the veterans organization in exchange for the cash. This helps assure that the full monetary donation gets to the proper destination.

THERE IS GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS!

4. The contest this year is a decorated or unique " treasure or strong box." It doesn't have to be big. I know many are flying in. (Maybe a ring or jewelry box?) Colorado is known for its gold, silver, turquoise, peridot, garnet, etc. So I thought it was an appropriate theme for our contest.

So safe travels to all of you and I am looking forward to seeing you in Colorado.



**Reunion Shirt
order form on
registration page**

from Lee Doyel regarding the future of YAGRS:

For the past couple of years I have been thinking about having the YAGRS join another military group to increase our bargaining with hotels, tour groups, etc. I have mentioned this at the last two business meetings but proposed no action. A group that has been brought to my attention is the Mariner Martin Association. They are a group of people that flew Navy seaplanes including the old Catalinas.

They had their annual reunion in May 2018 in Pensacola. I went over to the reunion and met their President and a couple of the board of directors and observed the group in their ready room (hospitality room). They are a declining group like us. I did not see any thing that bothered me. Their attendance for the past couple of years mirrors ours. I mentioned about the possibly joining the two groups to the president and directors and gave the president a YAGRS book. They said they would consider it. However I don't think they have given it much thought. They were apparently waiting on me to propose something.

In November 2019 I went on a 16 day cruise from Miami to LA via the new Panama Canal. Onboard was Doug Miles, the Mariners president. I took the opportunity to talk to him in detail about the possibility/feasibility of combining the groups. He seemed to think the groups could join without any problems. However it would require (as with YAGRS) a vote of association members. We agreed that a memo of understanding should be made and presented to each group for discussion and/or voting to join or not join together. No time line for presentation to both associations members was discussed or considered. However they have a reunion in Nashville the week after ours in Colorado springs and I plan to attend it to get a real feel for the situation.

As a result of the discussion I came up with the below memo. I am forwarding it to you guys for comment/ suggestions before I give it to Miles for his consideration. You can check out their web site at marinermarlin.com

> The below is a draft of a memo of understanding regarding the YAGRS Association and the Mariner Marlin Association on combining the groups for mutual benefit.

> As with the combining of any two organizations there will have to be compromises by each group. Some are known and some are not but will come up as efforts are made to combine the groups.

> The below memo is basic and an attempt made to keep it simple. Too much detail makes it cumbersome would not allow for adjustments to be made efficiently.

> It is not a legal document, just an agreement between two groups which can be nullified by a letter of disassociation.

> Please comment, suggest changes, etc. >

>

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

>

> Date

>

> PURPOSE

> To combine the YAGRS Association and the Mariner Marlin Association military reunion groups into one group for the benefit of both groups.

> Doing so will give the groups better negotiating leverage when dealing with and negotiating contracts with hotels, tour groups, etc.

> Both groups have declining membership due to passage of time and it is felt combining the groups will prolong their existence.

>

> SELECTION OF REUION SITE,

> Selection of the annual reunion location (city) will be in agreement of both groups.

>

> SELECTION OF HOTEL

> Agreement of both groups.

>

> SELECTION OF DATES

> Agreement of both groups.

- >
- > SELECTION OF TOURS
- > Agreement of both groups.
- >
- > REGISTRATION COSTS/FORM
- > Registration costs will be determined by agreement of each group leader based on costs/expenses
- > and broken down in detail, i.e. banquet cost, tours, hospitality/ready room, tours, etc.
- >
- > REGISTRATION PACKETS
- > Each group will make up their own registration packet.
- > However there will be common (one) registration form for both groups.
- >
- > BUSINESS MEETING
- > Each group will continue to hold separate business meetings.
- >
- > HOSPITALITY/READY ROOM
- > The costs of the hospitality/ready room will be split 50/50.
- >
- > BANQUET
- > Banquet costs will be shared.
- > This should be cost neutral as each individual will be paying for the banquet individually.
- >
- > YAGRS LADIES BREAKFAST
- > YAGRS practice of having a ladies breakfast while the men have their business meeting will continue.
- > However the Mariner Marlin Association ladies will be able to attend/participate if they so desire.
- >
- > REUNION SHIRTS
- > Each group will be responsible for their own reunion shirt.
- > There will not be a combined/common reunion shirt.
- >
- > NEWSLETTERS
- > Each group will continue to maintain and publish their group's newsletter
- >
- > INSURANCE
- > Each group will be responsible for it's own insurance.
- >
- > BANK ACCOUNTS/FUNDS
- > Each group will maintain it's own bank account, dues, funds, etc.
- > There will not be combining of funds.
- >
- > DISPUTES/DISAGREEMENTS
- > Any complaints/disputes on the operation of the combined groups will be done by conference/resolved between the leader of each group.
- >
- > DISASSOCIATION
- > The groups may at anytime or for any reason decide to disassociate from one another.
- > A letter from one association to the other stating a desire to leave the group will be sufficient to accomplish the disassociation.
- >
- > Signed

> Lee Doyel	Doug Miles
> Chairman	President
> YAGRS Association	Mariner Marlin Association

ship's coordinators - Ship's coordinators maintain an email list that is used to forward memos from the chair and advance notices of reunion plans to crew members. If you wish to be included, send an email to your ship's coordinator. We still need a coordinator for the USS Picket (AGR-7).

AGR-1 Frank St Mark smarks117@hotmail.com
AGR-2 Ralph Rappuhun rrappuhn@aol.com
AGR-3 Chuck Parker chuckparker@gmail.com
AGR-4 Steve Mierzejewsk stevejackie43@gmail.com
AGR-5 Bob Werstler rdwerst@sbcglobal.net
AGR-6 Lee Doolittle tleedoo@u.washington.edu
AGR-7
AGR-8 Ron Stasiak ronstasiak@rocketmail.com

AGR-9 Frank Mahaffey franknbets@gmail.com
AGR-10 Paul Langenus plangenus@cox.net
AGR-11 George Sleeper gsleeper@roadrunner.com
AGR-12 Jesse Germany jgermany31@gmail.com
AGR-13 Richard Willhite willys55nut@comcast.net
AGR-14 Joe Jackson jacksonj@pdi.net
AGR-15 Lee Doyel mldoyel@cox.net
AGR-16 Frank McNamara ec2sc1@comcast.net

Dues Payment Form - dues are \$17/year

Make checks out to YAGRS. Mail to:

Ray Ostrowski, Treasurer

123 Barbara Dr., Newburg NY 12550

Ray can also be reached at: e-mail: rayrosie@hotmail.com

phone: 845-565-6243 cell: 845-245-5707

Current membership year ends May 31, 2020. Highlighted date on address label is the date your current membership expires. If that date is **5/31/19** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive an updated membership card and crew list. Please complete the information below and mail to Ray Ostrowski with dues payment.. You may pay for more than one year.

Name: _____ Ship: _____

Address: _____

amount enclosed: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____

YAGR'S BOOK ORDER - from Joe Maurer, USS Vigil

Cost is \$22.00 each including postage.

No. Ordered _____ Total Amt. Due _____

Name _____

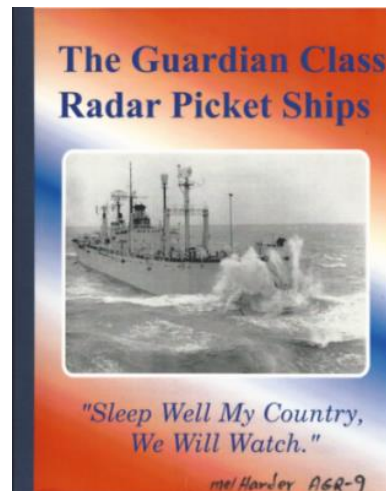
Address _____

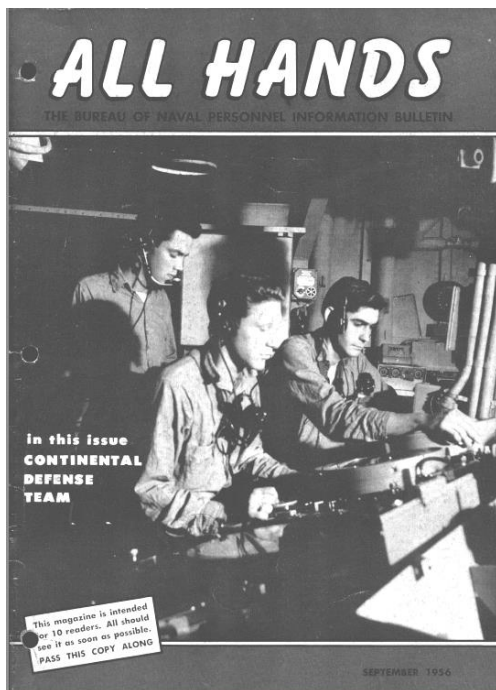
Phone _____ email _____

Detach and keep for receipt:

Paid to: Joe Maurer, 2127 S. Bristol Drive, Marblehead, Ohio 43440

E-mail: runinmuck@yahoo.com





THE RED STREAK

Spokane Daily Chronicle

222 3 SECTIONS SPOKANE, WASH., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1956. PRICE TEN CENTS

Navy Saves Crew of 15 From Missing Freighter

LONG BEACH, Calif., Dec. 17. (AP)—A navy ship today rescued 15 seamen who abandoned their sinking freighter in the Pacific.

The U. S. S. Watchman, a navy picket boat, found two lifeboats after hours of searching. All the crew was rescued and there were no injuries.

The coast guard here said it was presumed that the freighter S. S. Guam Pioneer, laden with scrap iron, had gone down.

The crewmen were to be transferred to another navy ship, the U. S. S. Picket, for return to San Francisco.

Earlier the agents for the freighter said they assumed it had gone down as there had been no messages since an SOS was received. The distress message from Capt. Mahlon Boese said there was flooding in the shaft alley of the hold.

The 300-foot, 3500-ton freighter sailed from San Francisco Sunday headed for Honolulu and then for Japan.

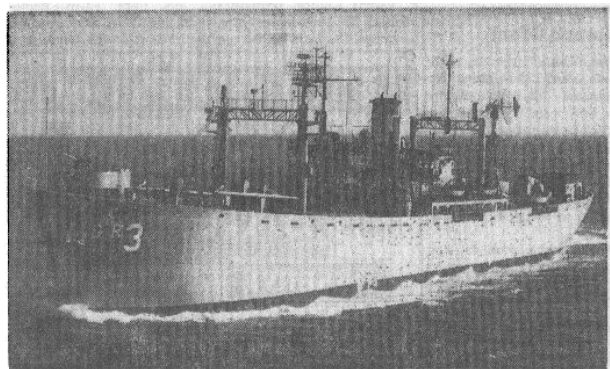
The ship's agent, Transmarine Navigation company, said four Americans were aboard: Captain Boese; Capt Harry Drew, one of the ship's owners; Hubert McCall of Honolulu, being broken in as the chief engineer, and Aubrey Corbett, believed to be from Texas, radio operator and second mate.

"Hard Luck" Ship

The Guam Pioneer had been plagued with bad luck. Just last October 20 it went aground off Honduras but was able to pull itself off. Then it put in at San Pedro here for inspection and repairs and had to leave because of an impending shipyard strike.

The freighter then sailed to San Francisco for the repairs and left there with the cargo it had picked up in Central America.

The ship is of Liberian registry, with its home port Guam. It was being transferred to American ownership.



Calling it a career? The radar picket ship, USS Skywatcher. —Navy Photo

Grueling Duty Will End Soon on 11 Picket Ships

By JOHN N. RIFFEY

Some of the most grueling but unglamorous duty in the U. S. Navy will soon end for eight tired Liberty ships and three slim destroyer escorts that now operate from Narragansett Bay.

They are radar picket ships that will be deactivated after a decade of service as part of the electronic barrier against bomber attack.

The eight converted Liberties operate from Davisville and the three destroyer escorts from Newport. They steam to positions 300 to 350 miles off the coast, the Liberties on posts from Cape Cod to South Carolina, the destroyer escorts reportedly farther south.

Until recently, the veteran World War II Liberties remained on their sea stations for three and a half weeks, then came back for two weeks in port.

In bad weather, the time at sea could seem interminable, especially for the radar destroyer escorts, which bob like corks in heavy seas.

Lt. (jg.) Richard M. Hardy, operations officer for Radar Picket Squadron Two, which consists of the eight converted Liberties, said in comparison to typical destroyer duty, the old freighters had the advantage of always returning to their home port where families and girlfriends wait, while destroyers are not at sea for such long periods but are away from home port for longer periods of time, frequently on foreign duty.

Lieutenant Hardy said the Liberties also have the advantage of more space for individual crew members and for communal activities.

For instance, he said they have libraries and in one hold they have a woodworking shop for those so inclined. In another hold is a gymnasium laid out with a basketball court. The men can also play volleyball.

The operations officer said some of the hold space is filled with ballast so that the Liberties will not roll so much. The ships must be relatively stable for maximum efficiency of the radar, he said.

The old Liberties have had their troubles, however. For instance, the Searcher was damaged by a six-hour fire in 1955. In 1959 one of her boilers was disabled by leaking tubes and she had to be towed to Boston. Last year the ship lost a propeller at sea and had to be towed to New York.

Life aboard a radar destroyer escort is much more constricted, and it can be much more uncomfortable. At one time many more radar destroyer escorts operated out of Newport, but in 1960 the Navy dropped a line of pickets that operated much farther to seaward than the present ships, as technology advanced. The missile age and further technological advances have not put the carrier forces out of business, the Navy announced yesterday.



(NY14-NOV.14) BURNING NAVY RADAR SHIP—Smoke pours from ventilating stacks as rescue boat approaches the burning Navy radar picket ship, the Searcher, yesterday after explosion ripped the craft southeast of New York City. Most of the blaze appeared confined to ship's engine room section. The Searcher is one of a number of surface craft spotted off the coast to signal the approach of unidentified planes. This picture was made by Coast Guard Warrant Officer W.H. Becker of the cutter Ingham which removed three sailors from the Searcher. (U.S. Coast Guard Photo via AP Wirephoto) (see story) (pr/hrm20810usag)1955



A generous donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, has covered registration and tour costs for this reunion
You must still complete and send the registration form to YAGR treasurer Ray Ostrowski no later than April 15

REGISTRATION FORM - YAGR'S 24th annual reunion
Colorado Springs, CO. May 19 - May 23, 2020

Return completed registration form as soon as possible but no later than April 15, 2020. Mail to YAGR'S treasurer Ray Ostrowski, 123 Barbara Drive, Newburgh, NY 12550. Print exactly as you want your name to appear on your name tag. Also, indicate your choice of meat, chicken, or fish for the Saturday evening banquet

NAME	_____	BANQUET CHOICE	_____
SPOUSE/GUEST	_____	BANQUET CHOICE	_____
ADDITIONAL GUEST(s)	_____	BANQUET CHOICE	_____
SHIP	_____	CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	_____

REGISTRATION IS AT NO COST - INCLUDES BANQUET DINNER AND TOURS

PRE REUNION TOUR TUES MAY 19	COST/ PERSON	# OF PEOPLE	TOTAL
DINNER THEATER	\$0.00		\$0.00
NAMES OF PEOPLE FOR TOUR -BUS LEAVES at 5:30 PM			
PRE REUNION TOUR WED. MAY 20	COST/ PERSON	# OF PEOPLE	TOTAL
PIKES PEAK	\$0.00		\$0.00
NAMES OF PEOPLE FOR TOUR -BUS LEAVES AT 11 AM			
REUNION TOUR FRI MAY 22	COST/ PERSON	# OF PEOPLE	TOTAL
ROYAL GORGE TRAIN	\$0.00		\$0.00
NAMES OF PEOPLE FOR TOUR -BUS LEAVES AT 11 AM			
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	\$0.00		

Staying in hotel	yes	no	REUNION SHIRTS	# of shirts	tot cost
sharing room	yes	no	small @ \$20 ea	_____	_____
if yes with whom _____			medium @ \$20 ea	_____	_____
use a walker	yes	no	large @ \$20 ea	_____	_____
use a wheelchair	yes	no	x-large @ \$20 ea	_____	_____
powered chair	yes	no	xx-large @ \$20 ea	_____	_____
hotel room conf. # _____			if not attending reunion		
email address _____			add \$5.00 shipping		_____
special dietary needs _____			total for all shirts		_____