



RadAR Picket Ships

YAGRGRAM #37

Summer 2005

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YAGR'S 10th Reunion

San Francisco, CA

May 19, 20, 21, 2005

First off I want to thank Allan Jones (AGR-5, 1964-65) for stepping up and helping at the reunion. He volunteered to pick up all the supplies we needed.

Our tenth reunion that was held in San Francisco, CA this 1st May was an overwhelming success. We had 153 former crewmen and 125 spouses/guests for a total of 278 people attending.

The weather for our pre-tour and the first day of the official reunion could have been a little more cooperative (rain one day and showers the second), but it did not deter us from enjoying ourselves.

On Wednesday's prereunion tour we had 99 people visit 3 different wineries and take in the sights (the rain and fog didn't help any) of California's wine region. It seemed that after a couple of glasses of wine, nothing bothered us at all.



Boarding one of the buses we had for the pre-tour.



Wet and windy at the rest stop by the Golden Gate Bridge.



Wine tasting at winery.

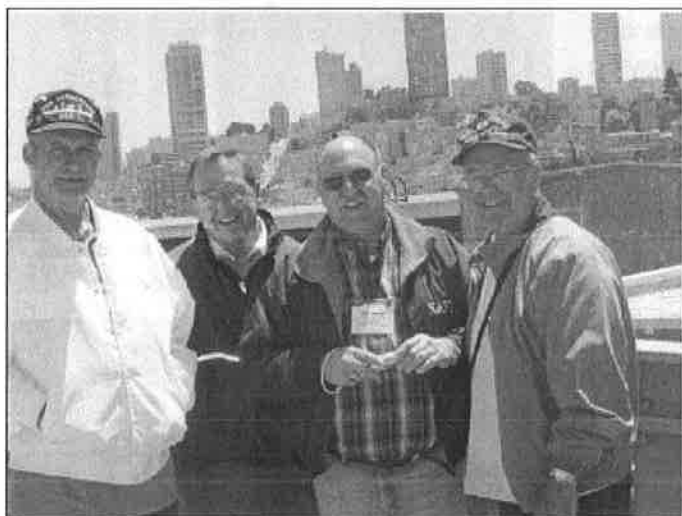
Even though large numbers of reunion attendees were taking in the sights of San Francisco and San Mateo, the hospitality room was still a busy place and the place to sit and relax or have a drink and a snack. Or, more importantly, to sit and shoot the bull about the ships and other memories of long ago.



General view of the hospitality room.

As part of our deal with the Marriott, they supplied transportation for us into San Mateo (a ten minute ride). They outdid themselves by supplying a luxury bus instead of the hotel shuttle I was expecting.

We put the shuttle to good use as it was running people back and forth to the downtown San Mateo restaurants and stores.



Our group tour took us on a tour of San Francisco in the morning. Afterwards we spent the afternoon onboard the SS Jeremiah O'Brien for lunch and a tour of the ship.

While onboard the ship we were free to visit all the spaces on the ship, including the engine room.



Looks like some serious talking is going on at this table.

Photo by Yvonne Cole



A group of picket ships sailors on liberty in San Mateo.

Photo by Yvonne Cole



Lunch in the O'Brien's #2 cargo hold.



Saturday morning's crewmens meeting was a full house. Wendell Bell (AGR-6, 1958-61) was presented with a plaque of the Locator for being the first to sign up for the reunion. The plaque he received was a miniature of the plaque that is on display in our exhibit on the Battleship Massachusetts.

We also raffled off a three-night stay at the Marriott as a fund raiser. Ken "RO" Rochette (AGR-5, 1955-58), was the lucky winner.

After going over various reports, the subject of our proposed book once again came up. Phil Axelrod (AGR-3, 1958-62), (at last year's reunion he volunteered to do some research on publishing a book) reported on his findings. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the best choice for us is to have the book printed on our own at a local printer.

Also a vote was taken for the location for our 11th reunion. St. Louis, MO was proposed by Ervin Thomure (AGR-4, 1956-60) and won by a wide majority. Hotel and dates are not set yet. This information should be ready by the time the next YAGRGRAM goes out.

Saturday evening 284 crewmen/spouses/guests got together for our farewell banquet. We started the evening off with cocktails before we sat down for an enjoyable evening. Once we all got settled in, the San Mateo Sheriffs department applied a color guard along with a bag piper to post the colors. They were piped onboard by Mike NeSmith (AGR-9). The sideboys were Tom Giardina (AGR-3), Charlie Hooper (AGR-7) and I am sorry to say, I don't recall who the other sideboy was. (Note to whoever you are, get back to me so I can add your name in the next YAGRGRAM). If anyone has a picture of the sideboys, please get it to me so that I can put it in the next YAGRGRAM.

St. Louis, MO

Site of YAGR'S 2006 Reunion.

YAGR'S Book.

As mentioned above, we will be working on a book that will give information, history, pictures and data on the Radar Picket Ships.

After reviewing some of the information we have, we find that we need:

- Listing of the Captains of the ships
- Full Name and rank and dates served as Captain of the ship

Also if you have anything that you think will be interesting, send it in and we will see if it will fit into the book. A note regarding the contents of the book. In the past we have asked for information, pictures, etc. and the response has been fair, but I have noticed at our reunions and on various web sites, items that would have been useful during the course of setting up the displays on the Battleship come to light. It is too bad we

did not receive these pictures/information before it was too late to incorporate into our exhibit. Don't let this happen to the book. If all goes to plan, we will have a layout of some sort at the St. Louis reunion for you to view and comment on before we go to print.

Another feature that could be incorporated into the book are sea stories and/or experiences you had while serving on the ships. At the reunion it was suggested we put together a book on the above, but it makes more sense to include it into the YAGR'S book if possible. While I do have stories that have been sent in for the YAGRGRAMS, we can use more. If you do send one in, there is no guarantee that it will be included in the book. Also, please don't send anything too negative and, if possible, please type it.

Spouses/Guests

Photo's by Yvonne Cote



125 spouses/guests gathered for the annual breakfast/penny social. After breakfast those who brought a tote bag for the contest showed off their handiwork, Lucy Smith, whose idea it was to decorate tote bags, left hers at home. Shame on her. While it was difficult to pick the best, (and who was the one who tried to buy votes by handing out candy), Cherrie Westcott was declared the winner.

After the contest, the penny social was held. With 7 tables of gifts (many hand made) to choose from, the action started. A thank you goes out to all who brought gifts. When

all was said and done, all had an enjoyable time.

2006 in St. Louis, MO



Cherrie Westcott winner of tote bag contest.

S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien Post Reunion Cruise



Photo's by Yvonne Cote

Sunday May 22, 2005 two bus loads (105 people) of former picket ship crewmen and their guests departed the hotel for a short ride to pier 41 in San Francisco board the S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien for a day cruise on board her. All told the ship had over 900 people on board who signed up for the cruise.

Without a doubt, all who cruised on her had a enjoyable time. The weather couldn't have been better; the food and drink were great; and, for the west coast crewmen, it brought back memories of long ago as we passed under the Golden Gate Bridge. As far as the east coast crewmen were concerned, passing under the bridge was something that one will never forget.

While the ship lay dead in the water, a memorial service was held by various groups, (YAGR'S included) to remember former crewmen and loved ones. Admiral Tom Patterson (AGR-1, 1954-56) senior officer onboard, and Tom Giardina (AGR-3, 1961-63), enlisted who was in uniform, had the honor of casting a wreath into the waters to honor all deceased YAGRMEN.



Notice!!!!

My new e-mail address is

yagr@cox.net

Sea Stories Needed!!!

We are always looking for sea stories to publish in the YAGRGRAMS. If you feel you have something of interest, send it in.

We hope that you will take this opportunity to send in any articles that relate to your time spent on the radar picket ships. And, as a side benefit, you just might hear from some of your former shipmates who decide to get in touch with you and talk about old times.

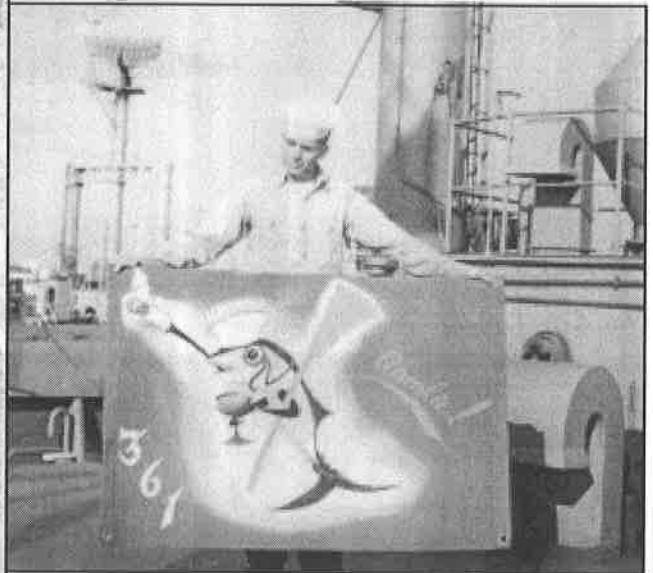


Photo sent by David Spriggs (AGR-14) dated 1964

NAVAL MESSAGE		CLASSIFIED BY		PHONE EXT. NO.		PAGE		PAGES	
RELEASED BY		CLASSIFIED BY		PHONE EXT. NO.		PAGE		PAGES	
DATE		CLASSIFIED BY		PHONE EXT. NO.		PAGE		PAGES	
19 AUGUST 1964		SECRET							
MESSAGE NO.	DATE/TIME GROUP (BEST)	PRECEDENCE	CLASS	ASSIGNMENT	INSTITUTE	PRIORITY	STATUS	EXPIRES	
LD 1909	190701Z AUG 1964	ACTION					XXXX		
FROM: U.S.S. INTERCEPTOR									
TO: U.S.S. INTERPRETER									
INFO: RADRON ONE / BUFISH									
UNCLAS.									
1. THE MIGHTY FISHERMEN OF INTERCEPTOR ARE RETURNING TO PORT AND THE REEFERS ARE BULGING WITH 451 ALBACORE WEIGHING A TOTAL OF 3,852 POUNDS, WHICH ESTABLISHES A NEW PACFLT RECORD.									
2. ANOTHER RECORD WAS CAPTURED BY INTERCEPTOR WHEN, WITH A SUPERB DISPLAY OF SKILL, A TOTAL OF 21 ALBACORE WERE TAKEN DURING A ONE HOUR PERIOD ON 10 AUGUST.									
3. REQUEST ALBACORE FLAG BE REFURBISHED AND READY FOR DELIVERY, WITH APPROPRIATE CEREMONY, ON OUR ARRIVAL 20 AUG.									
wu/cb SEND SHIP/SHORE // PICKET COMM. // PNR/CB									

Message was sent in by Ray West (CO, AGR-8, 1964-65)

From what I understand the west coast ships had a contest amongst themselves to see which ship would land the most fish. Going by the above message, it looks like the Interceptor (AGR-8) wanted the flag that the Interpreter (AGR-14) had as soon as she arrived in port.

All was not fun and games. Catching the fish had been helpful to the Fish and wildlife Service, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries. The bureau passed along information the picket ships supplied to fisherman who could plan their fishing strategy more efficiently.

Dues.

Dues for June 1, 2005 to May 31, 2006 are now being taken. When writing your check, make it out to YAGR'S and send it to me (address on page #1). As a reminder, if this is the first time you are paying your dues they are \$17.00; otherwise dues are \$15.00.

Your dues are what helps keep YAGR'S going. They pay for newsletters, postage, phone, help in finding former crewmen, help to support our exhibit on the Battleship Massachusetts and a whole slew of miscellaneous items in support of YAGR'S.



YAGR'S Exhibit

Onboard the Battleship Massachusetts

Fall River, MA



Roland Cote (AGR-10, 1961-63), Jack Floyd (AGR-11, 1962-64, YR-65, 1964-65), Tom Giardina (AGR-3, 1961-63), John Hemminger (AGR-2, 1960-61), Henry MacKay (AGR-12, 1962-64), Harry Miller (AGR-11, 1962-64, YR-65, 1964-65), Al Nannini (AGR-15, 1960-62) and Jim Spiegel (AGR-12, 1963-65) spent the weekend of March 18,19,20, 2005 working on our exhibit on board the Battleship Massachusetts.

This weekend proved to be a very productive one. While Roland, Tom and Al reinstalled the addition to the radar room (this will house the computer and monitor we will be using to show the video we are putting together about the ships), we also worked on projects for the radar room. Henry and Jim made up three I beams (out of wood) that will support the plotting boards, Jack installed overhead lighting and John installed various items on the watch officer's console. All the while Harry jumped in where needed.



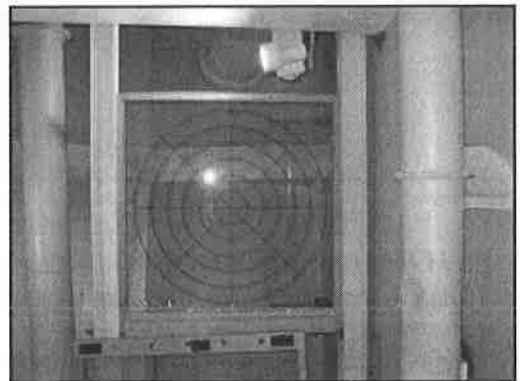
John working on console.



Henry and Jim working on I Beams while Tom looks on.



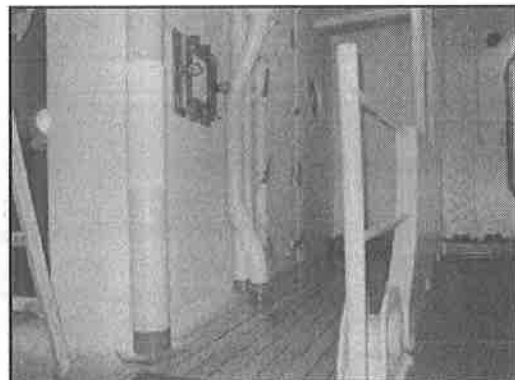
Henry, Jim, Tom, Roland, Al, Jack and John.



One of two boards set in between I beams.



Jack looking over Roland's shoulder while he is checking door opening.



View of addition.

1956 Ship Commissionings

1956 four radar picket ships were commissioned. The ships listed by date of commissioning were:

January 21, 1956	USS Locator AGR-6
January 30, 1956	USS Scanner AGR-5
February 8, 1956	USS Picket AGR-7
February 15, 1956	USS Interceptor AGR-8



U.S.S. LOCATOR (AGR-6)

LIBERTY SHIP: SS FRANK O. PETERSON

BUILT BY:	J.A. JONES CONSTRUCTION CO., PANAMA CITY, FL
KEEL LAID:	09 FEBRUARY 1945 (HULL #2347)
LAUNCHED:	23 MARCH 1945
SPONSORED BY:	MRS. EVELYN FLYNN
PLACED IN SERVICE:	06 APRIL 1945
PLACED IN RESERVE FLEET:	30 OCTOBER 1945



U.S.S. LOCATOR (AGR-6)

CONVERTED:	10 JUNE 1955 AT CHARLESTON, SC
COMMISSIONED:	21 JANUARY 1956 AS YAGR-6 AT CHARLESTON, SC
HOMEPORT:	17 MARCH 1956 AT SAN FRANCISCO, CA
RECLASSIFIED:	28 SEPTEMBER 1958 AS AGR-6
DECOMMISSIONED:	09 AUGUST 1965
DISPOSITION:	03 OCTOBER 1974 SOLD AS SCRAP FOR \$171,787.21

Locator arrived on radar picket station #7 at 0001 on 1 July, 1956. Thus she was the first Radar Picket Ship (YAGR) to man a seaward extension radar station on the west coast.



If you have placed an order for an item and you have not received it yet, please get in touch with us.

All of the ships' emblems, RADRON ONE, RADRON TWO hat/lapel pins are in color and are approx. 1 inch in diameter.

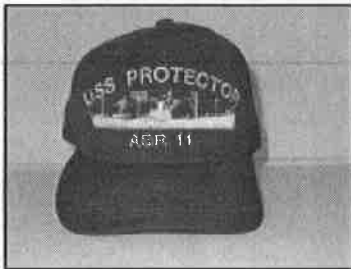
Two new pins USS Guardian AGR-1
USS Interceptor AGR-8



Lapel/hat pin silhouette of a picket ship is in color and is 1-1/2 inches long.

Hat specialty devices: BM, BT, DC, DK, GM, IC, EM, EN, ET, HM, *HT, MM, MR, MS, QM, RD, RM, SH, SK, SM, YN, are on hand, but in a limited quantity. As I run out of them I will then have to order more. This could take up to 6 weeks to receive. Specify device desired.

*New Shipfitter Rating



ITEM	EACH		QUANTITY		SUB TOTAL
HAT HULL # _____	\$19.00	X		=	
DENIM SHIRT HULL # _____	S, M, L, XL \$33.00	X		=	
SIZE _____					
SIZE _____	XXL \$35.00	X		=	
HAT/LAPEL PINS \$4.50 EACH OR ANY TWO FOR \$8.00					
YAGR'S LOGO HAT/LAPEL PIN		X		=	
RADRON ONE		X		=	
RADRON TWO		X		=	
GUARDIAN AGR-1		X		=	
SKYWATCHER AGR-3		X		=	
LOCATOR YAGR-6		X		=	
INTERCEPTOR AGR-8		X		=	
PROTECTOR AGR-11		X		=	
TRACER AGR-15		X		=	
RADAR PICKET SHIP PIN 1-1/2" LONG		X		=	
PO1, PO2, PO3 CROW FOR HAT PO _____	\$4.50	X		=	
HAT SPECIALTY DEVICE SPECIFY DEVICE _____	\$4.75	X		=	
COFFEE CUP	\$15.00	X		=	
MAKE CHECKS OUT TO YAGR'S SHIPPING IS INCLUDED			TOTAL		\$ _____
YOUR NAME					

Note: All orders must reach me by July 30, 2005. This is when orders will be placed with our suppliers. It can take up to six weeks after that for you to receive your order.