



Radar Picket Ships

YAGRGRAM #47

WINTER 2007

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13th Annual Radar Picket Ship Reunion

Please note that this year the days of the reunion are from Sunday, May 18, to Tuesday, May 20, 2008.

Our pre-reunion tours will be held on Friday the 16th and Saturday the 17th of May. The general format will stay the same (see projected reunion schedule).

The Host Hotel will be the
Crowne Plaza At The Crossings
801 Greenwich Ave.
Warwick, RI
(401) 732-6000

The room rate is \$109.00 per night, which is good from May 13, 2008 to May 23, 2008.

When you make your room reservations, make sure you tell them you are with YAGR'S.

The hotel has a free shuttle from the Providence airport to the hotel.

This hotel is a very busy hotel and may sell out. Please make your reservations early.

The projected reunion schedule is as follows

Friday May 16, 2008: pre-reunion tour to Mystic Seaport

Saturday May 17, 2008: pre-reunion tour to Boston, MA

Sunday May 18, 2008: day one of reunion
(registration and hospitality room open)

Monday May 19, 2008: Group Tour
Battleship Massachusetts
(Rededicate YAGR'S Exhibit)

Tuesday May 20, 2008:
Mens meeting
Spouses/Guests breakfast
Farewell Banquet

Reunion Registration.

The reunion registration fee for this year will be **\$92.00 per person**. This covers the hospitality room with light snacks and beverages, group tour with lunch (May 19, 2008), spouses/guests breakfast and farewell banquet.

Questions answered.

What to wear: Causal clothes are the norm. The only exception is for the farewell banquet. The men wear a suit or sports jacket or you might want to wear your uniform; the women a dress or suit.

Can we bring family members or friends to the reunion: Yes, family and friends are most welcome.

Group Tour, Rededicate YAGR'S Exhibit On The Battleship Massachusetts Monday, May 19, 2008



We will board our bus at the hotel for the trip to the Battleship Massachusetts to rededicate our exhibit. The first item on the agenda is to hold a memorial service on the Battleship's fantail, after which we will proceed to our exhibit to unveil the new YAGR'S exhibit. While onboard the ship, we will have lunch in the Battleship's wardroom.

If you have a uniform, you might want to consider wearing it to the rededication of our exhibit.

If you plan to go on either of the pre-reunion tours, it is advised that you reserve your room by February 4, 2008. Due to the contract we have with the hotel, rooms for the pre-reunion dates might not be available at our negotiated room rate of \$109.00 if reserved after February 4, 2008.

**Pre-reunion Tour to Mystic Seaport (lunch on your own)
Friday, May 16, 2008 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**



Mystic Seaport — The Museum of America and the Sea — is the nation's leading maritime museum.

Explore American maritime history firsthand as you climb aboard historic tall ships, stroll through a recreated 19th-century coastal village or watch a working preservation shipyard in action.

For those of you who would like to do a little shopping, we will have a shuttle service from Mystic Seaport to Olde Mystik Village. There are restaurants at the Seaport and at Olde Mystik Village to enjoy lunch on your own.

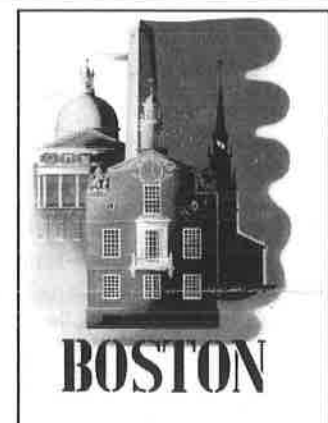
Olde Mystik Village has a unique collection of shops and has become a favorite shopping center for local residents as well as for Mystic's many visitors.

Also, it is just a short walk from the village to the Mystic Aquarium for those of you who are interested. There is an entrance fee for the aquarium which is not included in the tour.

**Pre-reunion Tour To Boston, MA (lunch on your own)
Saturday, May 17, 2008 9:00 am to 4:00 pm**

Boston, Massachusetts, the "Birthplace of the American Revolution" abounds in history. On a driving tour of the city, see the Old State House, Beacon Hill, the U.S.S. Constitution, Harvard University and other highlights. After the driving tour there will be free time for lunch and shopping at the world famous Quincy Market.

We picked a Saturday for this tour so that we would avoid the notorious Boston traffic. Hopefully we will not be hung up in traffic jams as we were in Washington, DC.



We are looking for some help.

We would like to get a few extra hands to help in getting our exhibit ready for the rededication of our exhibit coming up this May. While most of the construction is done, we will need help with the cleaning up and squaring away of the exhibit. You do not need any special skills. All you need is the desire to help.

Contact me (Harry Miller) at (401) 724-7278 or yagr@cox.net. I am sure we can work something out to arrange a time and date for you.

**YAGR'S Dues
Now \$17.00 Per Year**

When writing your check, make it out to YAGR'S and send it to me (address on page #1).

If you have paid your dues and did not receive your membership card and latest crewmen list that is sent with it, let me know.



Spouses and Guests

Breakfast, raffle, hat contest and most of all a chance to meet one another at a function just for you. The men will be at their meeting, so why not join us for our Spouses/Guests breakfast get together.

You will be able to sit down and enjoy breakfast, maybe win that something you have been looking for at our raffle and show off your talent or at least have a laugh in the hat decorating contest. As this year's theme, "Wild and Crazy" implies, just have a good time.

While the cost of the function is included in the reunion registration, we do ask all the spouses/guests to bring an inexpensive item to be raffled off. Bring something you would like to win and you can't go wrong. Are you into crafts? Handmade items are always among the favorites.



Washington, DC hat contest

2009 Reunion. San Diego, CA

2009 will find us in San Diego, CA once again. I have been in touch with Mike NeSmith (AGR-9) who is the area contact person. He will be checking out locations for us after the holidays.

2010 Reunion. Is a cruise in the future?

This information is being passed along to you so that you and your spouse can decide if you think a cruise would be a good idea for a reunion.

At the mens meeting at our 12th reunion held in Washington, DC the possibility of going on a cruise ship for our 15th reunion in 2010 was brought up. It was decided that we would need some information before we could make a decision on whether or not to vote on a cruise.

I have been in touch with a cruise line and a travel agent, and based on preliminary talks I have had with them, it can be done to our satisfaction. In other words a cruise is very doable for a reunion. The cruises vary by cruise line: length, cost, ports of call and of course, time of year. I would think that something in the 5 night range would be something for us to look at.

It appears that the cost would be comparable to a reunion held at a hotel. At this time they are unable to quote a cost this far in advance. Something you might do is to go on line and check out the cost for cruises and this should give you an idea on what cost you would incur. Bear in mind the type of cabin you choose will vary in cost and will reflect your total cost. I am hopeful that we can get a special rate, but until I can get a good idea of how many cabins we will need, it is not possible to tell what it would be.

Something else to think about is that all food, entertainment and tour (ports of call will be the tour) costs are included in the cruise cost. Another cost that will be greatly reduced is the registration fee.

I will be checking with other cruise lines and travel agents to determine who can offer us the best deals. I hope to have some more information that I can pass along to you in the next YAGRGRAM.





Raymond Hand (AGR-16, 1960-62)

Whale Migration – A Big Sea Story

The USS Watchman AGR-16 was on patrol on a beautiful warm sunny day which, as you all know, was an unusual occurrence in the North Pacific. Our CO, CDR Tuttle was not aboard. As senior captain in the squadron, he had stayed ashore as acting Commodore, because the Commodore was ill. Lt Jefferis, our XO, then became our acting CO.

We were drifting slowly across our assigned station with the main engine shutdown and only one boiler on line. I was the OOD on the 1200 to 1600 watch, and because of the good weather I had requested and received permission to move the bridge watch from the pilothouse to the flying bridge. We were enjoying the good weather, when suddenly, one of the lookouts shouted, "Look at the horizon, Mr. Hand." A black line was moving towards us. As the black line got closer we realized it was hundreds and hundreds of migrating grey whales swimming three and four abreast. The horizon was about seven miles away. The line of whales passed close aboard to our ship's position and, at one point, extended from horizon to horizon a total distance of at least fourteen miles.

Once I realized what was happening, I informed Captain Jefferis. He immediately ordered me to pass the word that he was leaving the ship. I announced over the 1MC, "Watchman departing" at which time several officers and chiefs came to the flying bridge to see if I had lost my mind.

Mr. Jefferis then ordered me to make ready a motor whaleboat and we lowered him and a crew of three or four into the water. They proceeded to motor near the migrating whales taking pictures with the ship's only camera – a Polaroid. They eventually returned to the ship and I announced, "Watchman arriving." In time, the last of the whales disappeared over the horizon and the patrol returned to normal.

At the San Diego reunion I asked Jim Jefferis if this all really happened since it was a very long time ago. He assured me that it did. I will never forget that once in a lifetime experience.

Jack McGee (AGR-10 1962-64)

April is the cruelest month

The 1963 winter was almost over, but early April still offered us a cold, gray sky as the USS Outpost AGR 10 steamed leisurely down the Narragansett Channel, past Block Island, toward the open sea, heading to our North Atlantic picket station. Soon, we secured the Sea & Anchor detail and I went below to other pursuits. I had joined the crew in January, assigned to the Navigation Department as a Seaman Apprentice. Though I held a college degree, I was not enthusiastic about, and pretty slow to learn, my duties using LORAN and Semaphore. My slovenly attitude changed overnight.

Later that evening, I was duty Quartermaster on the 20-24 watch, and it was now about 21:00 as we steamed uneventfully into the open sea. Nantucket Lightship had bobbed past less than an hour before, and I was sitting in the charthouse preparing my hourly Posit (position report) for the Officer of the Deck when that officer burst out of the Pilot House and yelled, "McGee, you have light on the Starboard Bow." Frankly, I had no idea what that meant in terms of what I was supposed to do about it. Nevertheless, I quickly ascended the ladder to the Flying Bridge where I could see clearly that our ship was getting flashing light from at least four separate ships on the dark horizon. Other than their flashing light to Starboard and Port, and dead ahead, they were invisible.

Knowing only that "S" in semaphore meant "wait," I began flashing that single message in every direction while I yelled to the Starboard Lookout, Ron Ruffin BMSN, "Ruffin, get Hall! Get Hall!" Jim Hall, a First Class Signaller was a heavily tattooed sailor with wide experience who had been in the Navy since Davey Jones was a cowboy, and on the picket ships too long for his own good, but he was a master signaller. In a few minutes, shirtless and wearing only dungarees and a pair of soft slippers, Hall padded over to me at the Port signal light where I was flashing furiously and panting very heavily. "What seems to be the difficulty?" Hall asked nonchalantly, while he grasped the situation at a glance. He shoved a notebook in my hands. "Here, Boot. Take notes." Suddenly, Hall was in charge and I was relieved to have him there.

In a matter of minutes, Hall was operating both semaphore stanchions simultaneously, flashing from one contact to another. Then, like an uncaged monkey, he deftly leaped onto the big spotlight tower and began operating that as well. All through that exhibition, he was shouting messages at me and I scribbled as fast as I could on the notepad. Within only a few minutes, Hall leaped down from the light tower, pushed past me and slid down the ladder to the Pilot House. Within five minutes he was back at my side, and I could feel the ship slowly changing course sharply away to the North. Soon the flashing light stopped and we could not make out the contacts on the horizon any longer. There was just the deepness of darkness from horizon to horizon.

Later, I learned the message that Hall had received was to the effect, "Immediately leave the area. Urgent! Immediately leave the area!" Other than that, we knew nothing about the situation, but I assumed there was some sort of Navy war game going on. The next morning we knew for sure:

In company with Skylark (ASR-20), Thresher put to sea on 10 April 1963 for deep-diving exercises. In addition to her 6 officers and 96 enlisted men, the submarine carried 17 civilian technicians to observe her performance during the deep-diving tests. Fifteen minutes after reaching her assigned test depth, the submarine communicated with Skylark by underwater telephone, apprising the submarine rescue ship of difficulties. Garbled transmissions indicated that far below the surface things were going wrong. Suddenly, listeners in Skylark heard a noise "like air rushing into an air tank" then, silence. Efforts to reestablish contact with Thresher failed and a search group was formed in an attempt to locate the submarine. Rescue ship Recovery (ASR-43) subsequently recovered bits of debris including gloves and bits of internal insulation. Photograph's taken by bathyscaphe Trieste proved that the submarine had broken up taking all hands on board to their deaths in 5,500 feet of water some 220 miles east of Boston. Thresher was officially declared lost in April 1963.

All the next day aboard Outpost there was a somber mood. The men talked little except to perform duties and assignments. There was no laughter, there was no yelling, there was only sadness; there had been a death in the family.

Sea Stories

We need more Sea Stories to put in the YAGRGRAM'S.
If you have any sea stories you think will be of interest, send them in for possible publication.



YAGR'S Exhibit Battleship Massachusetts

The actual construction of the few items we have to put together is at a standstill due to design considerations but the scheduling and planning for our rededication of the exhibit is still right on track. The only real major item that has to be done is the re-painting of the deck. But this will have to wait until a few weeks before our reunion.

The Wednesday work crew of Roland Cote (AGR-10), John Hemminger (AGR-2) and Harry Miller (AGR-11, YR-65) has been joined by Dave Terry (AGR-10) for the last few Wednesdays. Dave has managed to shuffle around his schedule in order to answer our call for help.

In regards to our call for some extra workers, we do not expect you to work on a regular basis, but if you have a day every so often, or for that matter a onetime effort, it would be a great help.

We are still working on the "Women Protecting US" Exhibit. Our portion of the work is moving right along and we expect to have everything done by March of 2008. This is when the exhibit sponsors hope to have a soft opening.



For Your Information

If you received an information request form along with this YAGRGRAM, **PLEASE RETURN IT!!!**

We are in the process of cutting our mailing list to help keep cost down. If it is not returned, I will assume you no longer wish to receive the YAGRGRAM.



John Hemminger and Dave Terry

1958 Ship Commissionings

In 1958 three radar picket ships were commissioned. The ships listed by date of commissioning were:

April 7,	1958	USS Interdictor AGR-13
September 28,	1958	USS Interpreter AGR-14
October 16,	1958	USS Tracer AGR-15



U.S.S. TRACER (AGR-15)

LIBERTY SHIP: SS WILLIAM J. RIDDLE

BUILT BY:	J.A. JONES CONSTRUCTION CO., PANAMA CITY, FL
KEEL LAID:	24 DECEMBER 1944 (HULL #2340)
LAUNCHED:	31 JANUARY 1945
SPONSORED BY:	MRS. MARION HARDERS
PLACED IN SERVICE:	15 FEBRUARY 1945
PLACED IN RESERVE FLEET:	16 DECEMBER 1946

U.S.S. INTERRUPTER (AGR-15)

CONVERTED:	24 MAY 1957 AT CHARLESTON, SC
COMMISSIONED:	16 OCTOBER 1958 AS AGR-15 AT CHARLESTON, SC
HOMEPORT:	12 FEBRUARY 1959 AT SAN FRANCISCO, CA
RENAMED:	04 SEPTEMBER 1959 AS USS TRACER (AGR-15)
DECOMMISSIONED:	16 AUGUST 1965
DISPOSITION:	15 JULY 1974 SOLD FOR "NON-TRANSPORTATION USE" FOR \$200,010.00

Tracer's mission as a unit of RADRON ONE was to detect, report and track enemy airborne threats approaching by overseas routes and to control the intercepts used to destroy such threats.

NOTE: NEW SHIP PINS

USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9

USS INTERPRETER AGR-14



Note: All orders must reach me by January 5, 2007. This is when all orders will be placed with our suppliers. It can take up to six weeks after that for you to receive your order.

Hat/Lapel Pins.

All of the ships emblems are in color and are approx. 1" in diameter.

We have 2 new pins:

USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9

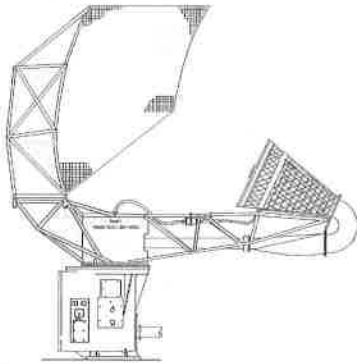
USS INTERPRETER AGR-14

Hat Devices.

BM, BT, DC, DK, EN, ET GM, HM, IC, MM, MR, MS, QM, SH, SK, SM, are on hand, but in a limited quantity.



All ship store items that have been ordered have been shipped. If you have not received something you have ordered, please get in touch with me.



ST0042 4/05/05 (2/07/06)

ITEM	EACH	QUANTITY	SUB TOTAL	
ALL HAT/LAPEL PINS LISTED BELOW ARE \$4.75 EACH OR ANY TWO FOR \$8.50				
YAGR'S LOGO		X	=	
RADRON ONE		X	=	
RADRON TWO		X	=	
YAGR DIVISION 21		X	=	
USS GUARDIAN AGR-1		X	=	
USS LOOKOUT AGR-2		X	=	
USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3		X	=	
USS SEARCHER AGR-4		X	=	
USS SCANNER AGR-5		X	=	
USS LOCATOR YAGR-6		X	=	
USS PICKET AGR-7		X	=	
USS INTERCEPTOR AGR-8		X	=	
USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9				
USS OUTPOST AGR-10		X	=	
USS PROTECTOR AGR-11		X	=	
USS VIGIL AGR-12		X	=	
USS INTERDICTOR AGR-13		X	=	
USS INTERPRETER AGR-14				
USS TRACER AGR-15		X	=	
USS WATCHMAN AGR-16		X	=	
COST FOR ITEMS BELOW ARE AS LISTED				
PO1 OR PO3 CROW FOR HAT PO2 NOT AVAILABLE				
PO _____ WANTED	\$4.65	X	=	
HAT SPECIALITY DEVICE SPECIFY DEVICE _____	\$4.90	X	=	
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO YAGRS	TOTAL			
YOUR NAME				

YAGR'S
13th Annual Reunion
Newport, RI Area (Warwick, RI)
May 18, 19, 20, 2008

Please return As Soon As Possible, But No Later Than April 15, 2008.

NAME _____

NAME OF SPOUSE/GUEST _____

SHIP SERVED ON _____ DATE ON BOARD _____ RATE _____

SHIP SERVED ON _____ DATE ON BOARD _____ RATE _____

Reunion Registration	Please Print
Providence, RI	May 18 - May 20, 2008

	Cost per person	X	Number of People	=	Sub Total
EXAMPLE	\$92.00	X	2	=	\$184.00
Dues paying members, spouses/guests	\$92.00	X		=	\$
Non dues paying members, spouses/guests	\$109.00	X		=	\$

Pre-Reunion Tours	SEE NOTE ON PAGE TWO!!!!!!!	Please Print
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Mystic Seaport					
Friday May 16, 2008					
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM					
Names of People going on tour					
	\$46.00	X	1	=	\$
	\$46.00	X	1	=	\$
	\$46.00	X	1	=	\$
Boston, MA					
Saturday May 17, 2008					
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM					
Names of people going on tour					
	\$34.00	X	1	=	\$
	\$34.00	X	1	=	\$
	\$34.00	X	1	=	\$

Reunion Shirts					
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	Small	Medium	Large	X LARGE	
\$18.00 each					
Number of each, times \$18.00					=\$
\$20.00 each					
Number of each, times \$20.00				XX- Large	=\$
				Total	\$

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