



# RadAR Picket Ships

## YAGRGRAM #55

Winter 2009

C/O Harry Miller, 230 West Forest Ave., Pawtucket, RI 02860-3318, (401) 724-7278, e-mail [yagr@cox.net](mailto:yagr@cox.net)

## YAGR'S 15th Reunion

### 2010 Reunion Cruise

Sailing on the Carnival Freedom

May 2 to May 8, 2010



#### CARNIVAL FREEDOM

Gross Tonnage - 110,000    Length - 952 feet  
Beam - 116 feet wide    Guest Capacity - 2,974  
Staterooms - 1,487    Crew - 1,150  
Registry - Panama

We originally set aside 75 cabins (mixed type) for YAGR'S and they have been going fast. A case in point, the number of interior cabins we had reserved for us sold out, but Holiday Cruises and Tours was able to get some more assigned to our cabin block, but at an additional cost of \$60 per person. This cost is reflected on the reunion registration sheet on page #8. Brian Forrester informs me that we also only have a few oceanview cabins left at our original contract rate. When they are gone that price will also increase.

My point, reserve your cabin now before the price increases further and your dining time with the group is assured. Remember, we are not the only people booking this ship this sailing date

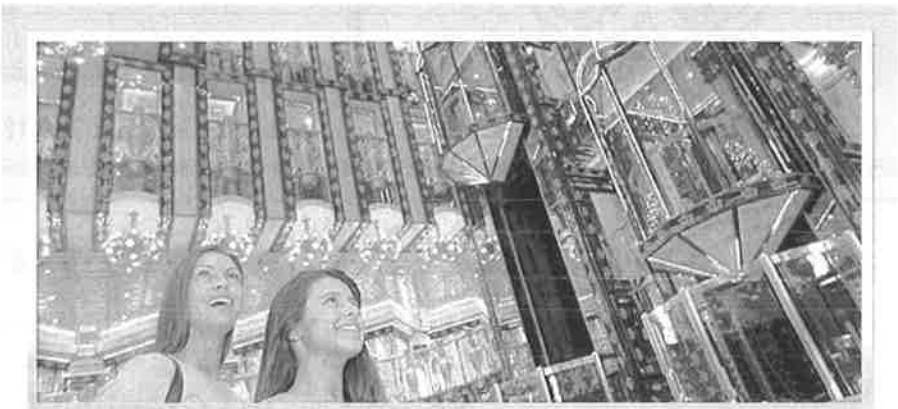
**December 3, 2009 is a very important date as far as our reunion cruise is concerned.** This is the date when the cruise line reviews our cabin block and decides if we will be able to add more cabins or, for that matter, take any unsold cabins out of the block.



Check out the Carnival web site at [www.carnival.com](http://www.carnival.com). You will find links so you can take a look at the ship, or if you have already booked your cabin, you can find links to get you set up for your cruise. Doing the paperwork online will save you time at checkin.

### YAGR'S 2010 Reunion Cruise

Pages 7 and 8 of this YAGRGRAM have the information and registration form for the reunion cruise. The registration form is from Holiday Cruises and Tours. This is the tour company that will be making all the cruise arrangements. It should be noted that only those who sign up with Holiday Cruises and Tours Company will be included in the YAGR'S shipboard functions -- no exceptions! The registration form on page #8 is to be sent to Holiday Cruises and Tours.



If you have any questions, please get in touch with me.

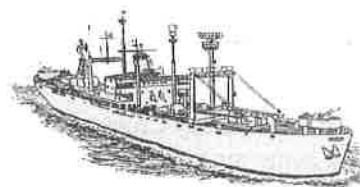
### If you have already booked your cabin.

Holiday Cruises and Tours Company has been keeping me posted on who has booked a cabin. Once I receive the names of people booking a cabin, I send them a YAGR'S reunion registration form. I will need this to keep track of everyone who will be on the cruise. There will be a very small registration fee. This fee will cover the reunion pins for all who will be at the reunion and miscellaneous expenses that YAGR'S incurs for the reunion.

**If you have booked a cabin and have not received a reunion registration form, please get in touch with me. Also if you have received the form and have not returned it to me yet, get it back to me as soon as possible.**



I have made some more cuts of those who have been on our mailing list. Removed from our list were those people who I have not heard from in any form whatever and those who have never paid dues.



**Dues  
\$17.00**

**Dues for the June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010 dues year are now being collected.**

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, a date will be above your name on the mailing label this YAGRGRAM came in. Also if you have paid your dues and there is no date above your name or you did not receive your membership card and latest crewmen list that is sent with it, let me know.





### **William Matheson (AGR-1, 1962-63)**

The departure of the USS Guardian AGR-1 from the CB Center, Davisville, R.I. on 16 October 1962 seemed very routine with the exception of having embarked with a young Air Force NCO who had exchanged duty stations with one of our Petty Officers for the duration of the cruise expected to last about three weeks. The young airman was stationed at one of the Communications Stations to which we reported our tracking information and had never been to sea before. We stood out to sea and began steaming for Picket Station 18, off the Virginia Cape.

On 17 October we relieved the USS Skywatcher AGR-3. On 19 October, the seas and wind had been building with the approach of Hurricane Ella. The seas were 25 feet and winds at 48 knots and the ship was rolling up to 30 degrees. Meals in the wardroom became gymnastic. Attempting to control glasses and china, the stewards wet down the table cloth to slow down the sliding dinnerware and served individual portions in the pantry. By dinner time very few were interested in eating and we were served sandwiches. The following day, we were feeling the full force of Ella. Seas had built to 40-45 feet. I was on watch in the pilot house observing the anemometer at the very instant that the wind carried away the gear as it passed 80 knots. The eye of the storm was clearly painted on the surface search radar passing 35 miles from our position. The wind continued to build. The massive air search radar antenna was locked down; the ship's rolling made tracking air contacts impossible. Sleeping was accomplished only by pushing one's back against the bulkhead and locking your legs against the opposite edge of the bunk. The maximum roll of the ship was recorded at 34 degrees. The rain flew horizontally and there was no defined line between wave, spray, and rain. The roar of the wind and the creaking of the ship was intense.

As the ocean returned to a more normal state over the next couple of days, the message traffic increased rapidly. The topic: Cuba and Russia. On 23 October we were ordered to steam south to Picket Station 20 which was not normally manned. There off Miami we positioned ourselves between what would be the route that Russian bombers would be on and the forming blockade of Cuba. US Navy vessels steamed by us to form up. I remember watching USS Boston CAG-1 steam by on the horizon and at that moment I felt a little like Mr. Roberts in the scene in which he watches the destroyer pass on its way to battle. Then I considered that, if the balloon does go up, we will be the early warning sentinel and would be the first to be blown out of the water with only two manually trained 3"50's for protection.

The activity was intense, as we were charged with reporting everything in the air, inbound and outbound. Other than the heavy workload, the greatest challenges were watching the same 8 movies over and over again and the deteriorating menu. The first ten days we had fresh milk, then recently thawed frozen milk, and finally powdered milk.

On 17 November, we steamed into Davisville, R.I. after 33 days at sea. The young Air Force NCO ran down the brow, kissed the pier, and vowed never to go to sea again.

**Do you have a good sea story that you would like to pass along?  
Send it in for possible publication in one of the YAGRGRAMS.**



## Special Projects

### Battleship Cove

#### 40 mm gun

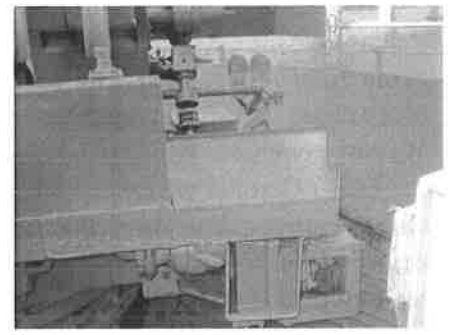
As reported in the last YAGRGRAM we took on a project to repair one of the Battleship's 40mm guns. We did repair the structural damage and repaint the gun, but we were unable to find the cause of the gun not being able to train or elevate. This was not for lack of trying. We opened every gear box, inspected ever gear and roller we could find, but to no avail. Having spent almost 300 man hours on repairs and trouble shooting the gun, we decided to cut our losses and call it a day.



One of three platforms we repaired. This one is at the trainer's platform and was the worst one.



New channel iron framing installed.



Trainer's platform after repairs were made.



Henry Mac Kay (AGR-12) grinding steel.



Roland Cote (AGR-10) watching Jim Spiegel, Jr. cutting steel plate.



Jack Floyd (AGR-11) (YR-65) and Tom Giardina (AGR-3) taking a break.



Jim Spiegel (AGR-12), Ken Pickett (a friend of Jim Spiegel) and John Hemminger (AGR-2) trouble shooting the guns system.



John Hemminger (AGR-2) putting finishing touches on newly painted gun.



Above: Dave Terry (AGR-10) has started installing plexi-glass shields on the gun sights on all of the ship's 40mm guns. He has also been spending time aboard the Battleship coxcombing (fancy line work) the handrails on the ship.





# YAGR'S Exhibit

## Battleship Massachusetts

We have started building the display cases for the binnacle, helm and engine order telegraph. Jim Spiegel (AGR-12) and his friend, Ken Pickett, arrived on the Battleship on Wednesday to work with the usual work crew of Roland Cote (AGR-10), John Hemminger (AGR-2) and Harry Miller (AGR-11, YR-65); Tom Giardina (AGR-3) came in on Friday to join the work crew.

The plan is to build three display cases that will be placed in various locations in our YAGR'S exhibit. We did have to move one sign and take down the ship's wheel that was mounted on a bulkhead. The ship's wheel will be incorporated with the ship's helm display and the sign will go where the ship's wheel was.

As usual, after building the cases and placing them where they will be installed, we had to disassemble them and take them back to our work area because the display cases will be vulnerable to damage if they are left out unfinished.



John and Roland building a base for a display case.



Ken and Jim placing a display case.



John and Tom placing another display case.

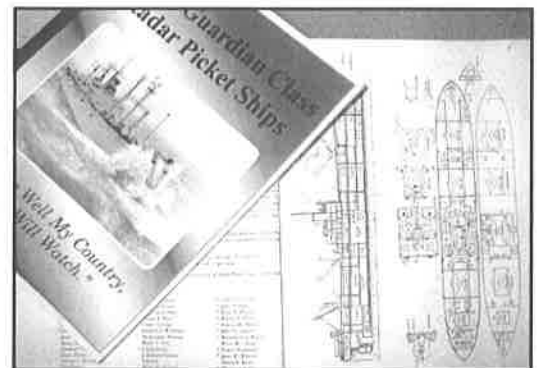
### YAGR'S Book

#### The YAGR'S book is no longer available.

If you have ordered a book and have not received it, please get in touch with me.

For those of you who are wondering, the sale of the book was outstanding. The input I have received so far has been very favorable. I have received some inquiries as to whether the book will be printed again. There is a possibility of it being reprinted if I find that there is enough interest and enough people get in touch with me to make it worthwhile to do so.

Also, if I get more information regarding anything that would be worthwhile adding to the book, it could be sent out as an addendum. But this will all depend on how much new or corrected information is received.



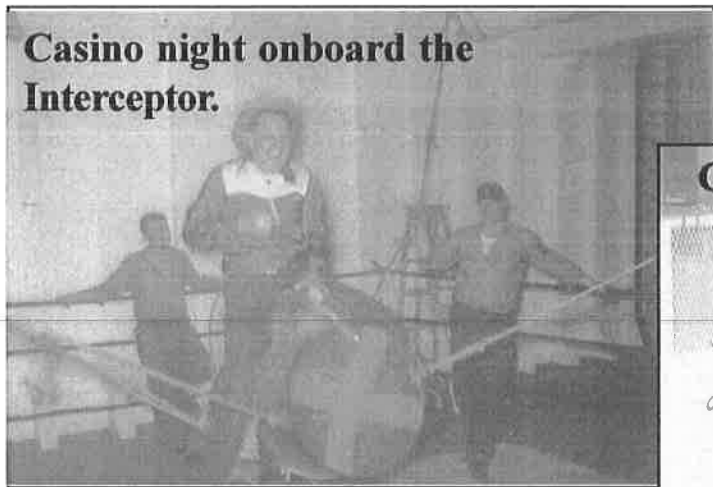


# RADAR PICKET SQUADRON ONE

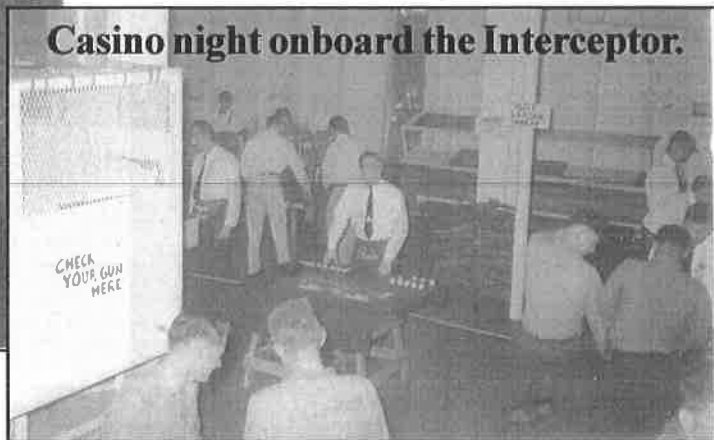
## USS Interceptor AGR-8



**Jack H. Brown**



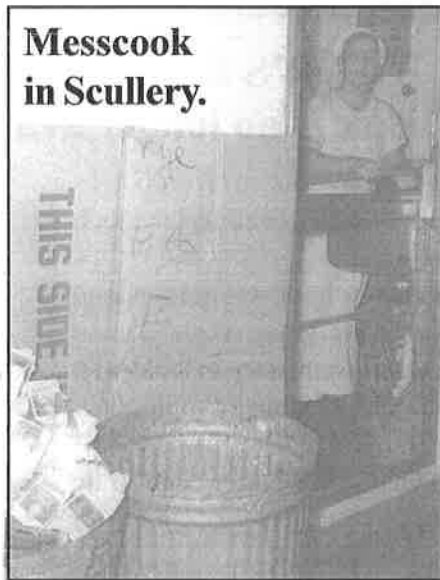
**Casino night onboard the Interceptor.**



**Casino night onboard the Interceptor.**



**Ship's Laundry.**



**Messcook in Scullery.**

**Thanks to Jack Brown and Larry Risen for the photo's.**

**If you have any photos you would like to share and have published in the YAGRGRAM, please get them to me.**



# 2010 YAGR'S REUNION CRUISE

6 day cruise on the Carnival Freedom.  
Carnival web site; [www.carnival.com](http://www.carnival.com)

Leaves from Ft. Lauderdale, FL  
Sunday May 2, 2010 returning Saturday May 8, 2010



Day	Port of Call	Arrive	Depart
Sunday, May 02	Ft. Lauderdale, FL		4:00pm
Monday, May 03	Key West, FL	8:00am	5:00pm
Tuesday, May 04	Fun Day At Sea		
Wednesday, May 05	Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands	7:00am	4:00pm
Thursday, May 06	Ocho Rios, Jamaica	7:30am	3:30pm
Friday, May 07	Fun Day At Sea		
Saturday, May 08	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	8:00am	

Cost: Inside cabin from \$606 per person, Oceanview cabin from \$646 per person, Balcony cabin from \$786 per person.  
**This includes all taxes, port charges and government fees.**

**TIPS NOT INCLUDED.** They will be added to your shipboard account, \$10 per day per person.  
We have set aside 75 cabins at these prices. If we find we need more early enough, we can add more. But, remember the longer you wait, the less chance you will have for our rates and functions. I would suggest you book now, as you will have a better selection of your cabin location. **EARLY BIRD GETS THE WORM!!!!**

A \$500 deposit per cabin is due at the time of booking your cabin (deposit is fully refundable up until final payment). Final payment is due February 1, 2010. Non-refundable after February 1, 2010.

For those of you who will be coming in early, you can book a room at the Courtyard by Marriott Ft. Lauderdale/Airport & Cruiseport  
400 Gulf Stream Way  
Dania Beach, FL 33004 Phone number Direct (954-342-8333), Central Reservations (800-321-2211)  
Room Rate \$109.00 per night (this rate is good 2 days before and after the cruise).  
This rate includes airport shuttle, cruiseport shuttle and complementary parking for YAGR'S people that are driving in.

Brian Forrester of Holiday Cruises and Tours (1-800-998-1228) will be taking our reservations for the cruise. He will also assist you with your air arrangements if you cannot book online or do not have a friend or family member to help you. He will also answer any questions you might have. When calling remember he is on PST time zone. Travel Insurance is highly recommended. Call Brian for details.

While on the Carnival Freedom YAGR'S will have;  
Hospitality room (on sea days), \$25.00 shipboard credit per cabin, a one hour cocktail party and group dining.

We are **trying** to set up a special bridge tour of the ship for the first 15 crewmen who sign up for the cruise. This tour is not available to the passengers.

**ONLY THOSE WHO BOOK WITH BRIAN WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE YAGR'S GROUP FUNCTIONS.**  
**CHECK ON THE LATEST PASSPORT REGULATIONS TO SEE WHETHER YOU NEED ONE.**

## Reunion Registration

### YAGR'S Registration Form

**Date May 02 - 08/2010 Carnival Freedom sailing from Ft.Lauderdale**

Passenger 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Passenger 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail (important) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3<sup>rd</sup> person \_\_\_\_\_ 4<sup>th</sup> person \_\_\_\_\_

**"LEGAL NAMES ARE REQUIRED ON ALL DOCUMENTATION"**

(i.e. ROBERT not BOB, ELIZABETH not LIZ)

**\*\*\* PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING \*\*\***

Interior cabins from \$606 p/p \_\_\_\_\_ Oceanview cabins from \$646 p/p \_\_\_\_\_ Balcony Cabins from \$786 p/p \_\_\_\_\_  
 For single or 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> person rates call Brian @ 800-998-1228

\*Above pricing includes all applicable taxes, gov't fees, port fees, onboard meals and all nightly entertainment. Prices are cruise only, per person, based on double occupancy and subject to change based on availability. A fuel surcharge may apply if implemented by the Cruise Line.

Travel Care Insurance is highly recommended. Cost per person is \$60.50

YES @ deposit \_\_\_\_\_ @ final payment \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

\*If you have any pre-existing medical conditions, you are advised to purchase your Travel Care Insurance at the time of your deposit. Call Brian @ 800-998 1228 with any questions.

If paying by check, make checks payable to: Holiday Cruises and Tours  
 Mailing Address: 6969 E. Shea Boulevard, Suite #101, Scottsdale, AZ 85254

Credit card payments: Amex \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ MC \_\_\_ Discover \_\_\_  
 Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name as it appears on the card \_\_\_\_\_

Auto charge final payment to this card Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

A deposit of \$250 per person is due @ time of booking to secure your cabin choice. Your deposit is fully refundable up until time of final payment which is February 1 / 2010.

I authorize Holiday Cruises and Tours to charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ON THE LATEST PASSPORT REGULATIONS TO SEE WHETHER YOU NEED ONE.

Please sign and return by mail or fax to **480-998-3849**