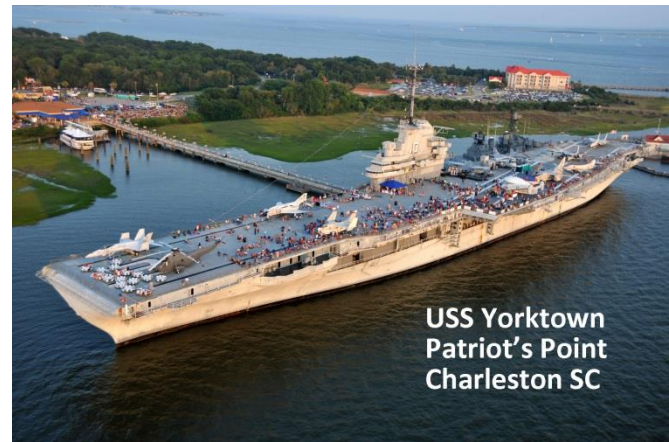
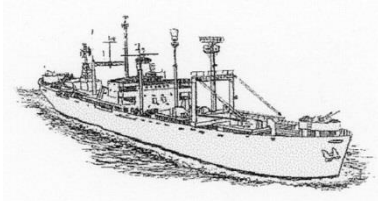


Message from Lee Doyel, Chair - 2015 Reunion, Charleston SC

We have a contract with a hotel in Charleston, SC for our 2015 reunion. The dates are April 30, May 1 & 2, 2015. The rate is \$100.00 a night plus 13.5% room tax and is good for 3 days prior and post reunion dates. I have not listed the name of the hotel as they have not yet set up an account for YAGRS. The above is for planning purposes. There will be pre-reunion tours as normal on April 28 & 29. Those are yet to be determined. It took some effort to get a \$100 rate as I discovered Charleston is, according to the hotels, the most desired destination city in the US. Also April & May are the most desirable and active months of the year for Charleston. Most hotels started at discount rates of \$140 and up for groups. I will furnish additional information/details at the San Antonio reunion.



USS Yorktown
Patriot's Point
Charleston SC



Sea Stories

email sea stories to mel.harder@snet.net. Would like to hear about the Cuban missile crisis.

submitted by Terry Hart (USS Lookout):

I served on the USS Lookout, AGR-2, as a Radarman out of Davisville, RI from late 1960 until late 1964. In 1960 or 1961 we were on station about 300 miles due South of Otis. In the middle of the night we were contacted by an RC 121 out of Otis. He was at the time of initial contact some 80 miles Southeast of us and was descending through 5,000 feet. He had lost two engines and was unable to maintain altitude. He informed us he was going to ditch and requested we vector him alongside and prepare to pick them up. The weather that night was terrible. We had 20 to 30 foot seas, 40 to 60 knots of wind, and zero visibility. We replied that there was zero chance of survival if he ditched. Following some discussion it was decided that possibly he would be able to remain airborne after he passed below about 100 feet on the ground effect. Fortunately that turned out to be true. His ground speed after setting down on the ground effect was only about 90 knots! He also informed us that he had dumped as much fuel as he could and still make it back to Otis. Also that they were throwing everything out a door that they could to reduce their weight. As I recall they had between 39 and 59 (don't remember the exact number but it ended with a 9) souls on board which surprised me. We were communicating on 121.5 and 243.0 and a Mats C-133 returning from Europe overhead what was going on and contacted us. He said he had plenty of fuel and if we would vector him for an intercept he could escort the 121 back to Otis. This is what we did. I remember them discussing the fact that Otis was several hundred feet above sea level and wondering how they would be able to climb enough to clear the cliff and be able to land at Otis if they made it back. Fortunately by the time they got there they had burned off enough fuel weight and thrown enough additional stuff out the door and were able to make a successful landing. I am now 72 and will never forget what happened that night. I would very much like to know the tail number of that aircraft, who those folks were in that airplane, if any of them are still alive, as well as any other details of that extraordinary event.



www.yagrs.org

Yours truly

Terry M Hart SR

608B South Potomac Street

Waynesboro, PA 17268

(717) 377-3977 tmhartsr@outlook.com

On 10/11/13 Mel Harder wrote:

to: Ralph Rappuhun, ship's coordinator for Lookout.

Ralph: Could you please send this along to Lookout crew members? Perhaps someone can add to the story.

On 10/12/2013 10:08 AM, RRAPPUHN@aol.com wrote:

Hello Shipmates. I guess we got tasked with this and I find it very interesting. If any of you have anything to add to this story please let us all know. I think I was the last crew member to check aboard before we were decommissioned in 1965 but I never heard of this. Thanks. Ralph Rappuhn

on 10/12/13 Harold Pazourek wrote:

To: RRAPPUHN@aol.com

Subj: Re: Fwd: RC 121 that lost two engines 300 miles south of Otis in 1961 or 1962

I left the LOOKOUT in December, 1957. This is new to me. We did have an incident in the winter of 1956-57 when we received a call from a P2V. They had a fire on-board and requested we rendezvous with them. Our ETA to their position was ten hours. They managed to get the fire out and returned to base with no assistance as far as I know. We were also on station when the Andrea Doria went down but too far away to render assistance.

Was the weather in that area ever nice in the winter? If so, we missed it. In 1956 we sailed on December 21 and returned January 25. As far as I can remember we had at least a sea state 5 the entire time. But that was a long time ago and memory tends to exaggerate things.

Harold Pazourek

submitted by Joe Maurer, USS Vigil

It was January 9, 1962 and I was going on my first cruise on a Navy ship since I joined the Navy one year earlier. I had just graduated from Aerographers mate "A" school and was assigned to the Vigil as my first permanent duty station. I joined the Navy to see the world and requested sea duty coming out of "A" school. I was the only graduate in my class to be assigned to sea duty and it was not a nice day for my first day at sea. As we left the pier in Davisville, I was beginning to experience sea sickness while we were still in Naragansett Bay. It was not a good time for captain's inspection of the AG shack area which was scheduled to take place soon as we were under way. Esters AG2 was at the hatch to announce the captain for the inspection.

Levesque AG2 along with myself were there to salute the captain as he entered. As the Captain started to enter I was unable to stand and salute. The reason being I was holding a mop bucket while barfing into it. He saw this and made a about face and did not enter. I was sea sick for five days before my stomach settled. Furthermore it took two more patrols before I got my sea legs.

Joe Maurer AG3, 1962-1963.



Dues Payment - make checks out to YAGRS ASSOCIATION

mail to Armand Lamarche, Treasurer, 3 Finnway St., North Billerica MA 01862

Dues are \$17 per year. The current membership year ends May 31, 2014. The highlighted date on your address label is the date your membership is current to. If that date is **5/31/13** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive a new membership card and crew list. Please complete the information below and send with dues payment. You may pay for more than one year.

Name: _____ Ship: _____

Address: _____

amount enclosed: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____

Duty on Navy's Sky Watchers

A FEW HUNDRED MILES off our coasts, slow-moving merchant-type ships plod their way—apparently on no particular business, bound for no particular destination and certainly in no hurry to get there.

They were there yesterday, and the day before. They'll be there tomorrow, and the day after—watching, waiting.

They are YAGRs—the latest Navy word in watchdogs.

YAGRs are ocean radar station ships (see *ALL HANDS*, September 1956, p. 25). Recently converted from World War II "Liberty" cargo vessels, they are now on stations in the Atlantic and Pacific defense system.

The first YAGRs joined the Fleet in the spring of 1955, after being converted at Norfolk, Va., and Charleston, S. C. Others joined the group early in 1956, and there are still more to come. They carry such names as *Skywatcher*, *Guardian*, *Scanner*, *Locator* and *Interceptor*—to mention a few.

Their names describe the vital role they play. The YAGRs operate in both the Atlantic and the Pacific, helping to form a protective radar screen ringing the continent to seaward.

Equipped with the latest improvements in electronic detection and communications devices, the ships are on the alert to intercept, warn and spread the alarm in case of unexpected attack on U. S. shores.

Actually, their job goes beyond a simple warning. For example, if an air or surface attack should come, the YAGRs would be on the job to alert interceptor planes, then help them in keeping tabs on the enemy.

The Navy's role in Continental Air Defense (CONAD)—and the job of the YAGRs, along with the radar picket ships and planes, was covered in detail in the September 1956 issue. But here is a brief description of what life is like on a typical YAGR.

Because they must stay at sea for long periods, YAGRs are comfortable ships. And, of importance

to the taxpayer, they are economical to operate. The Navy had all this in mind when the vessels were plucked from rows of "useless" cargo ships in the Maritime Administration's Reserve Fleets at Wilmington, N. C., and Mobile, Ala.

A YAGR has a complement of 15 officers and 168 enlisted men. Since the role of each ship is vital, and the duty on the monotonous side, much of the \$3,500,000 that went into converting each was spent on "habitability."

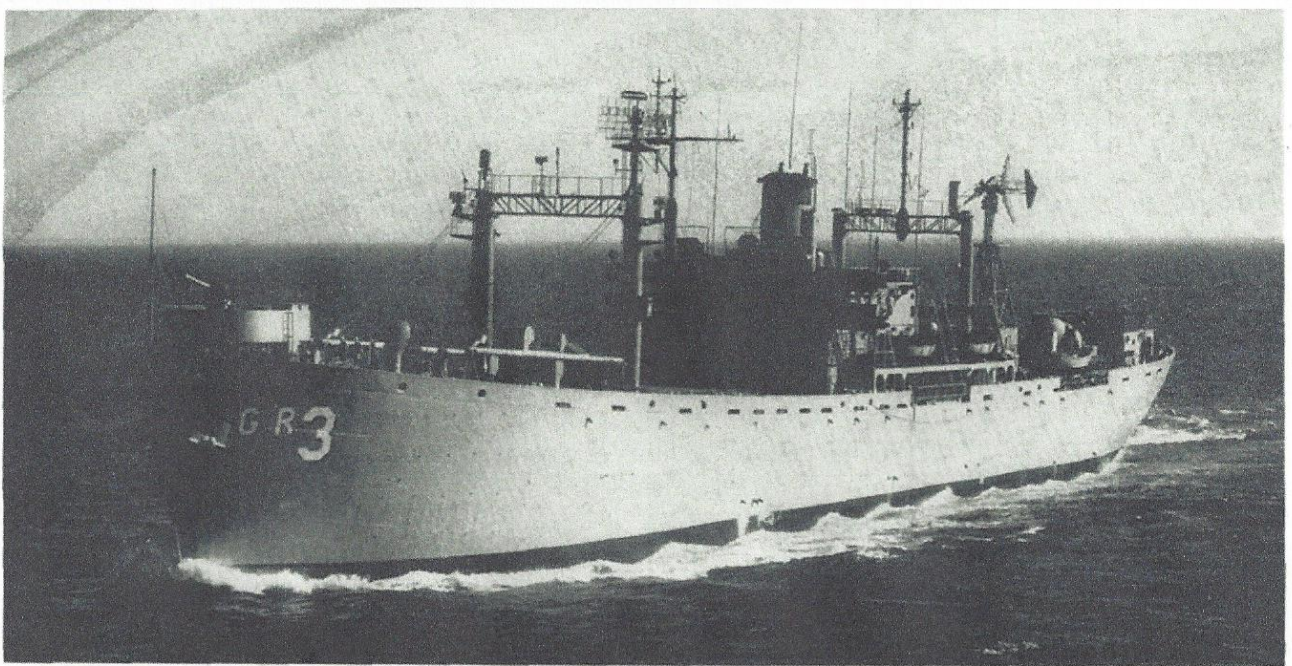
All personnel are berthed above the waterline in spacious, well-ventilated quarters—probably the most "livable" afloat.

Each officer has his own private stateroom, and the old-type seaman's bunk has given way to three-quarter size "CPO" beds for all enlisted men. Each man has his own bed lamp.

Living space is allotted according to rate. Chiefs live one or two to a room; first class, four; second class, eight or ten, and the remainder sleep in roomy quarters in double-stacked beds. In enlisted quarters (one could

INFORMATION CENTERS on ocean radar station ships are in constant use. Shown below: the eyes and ears of a YAGR.





hardly call them "compartments") eye-pleasing, delicate shades of green and cream have replaced the traditional white paint on the bulkheads. Officers' staterooms are often paneled in mahogany or pine.

Long periods at sea aboard the YAGRs call for an intensive program of recreation and entertainment to ward off boredom, which could easily become a ship's most dangerous "bogey." Like most other ships, the YAGRs have night movies and a library, but their recreation programs go beyond those usual in Navy ships.

Standard with the YAGRs are hobby shops, disc-jockey programs, large lounges for crew, CPOs and officers, plus a gymnasium. The gym is a converted cargo hold, and usual facilities include mats for wrestling, boxing and weight-lifting, ping-pong and volley-ball equipment. Some YAGRs have extended the program to include archery, golf, badminton and handball.

At least one of the YAGRs has a basketball court.

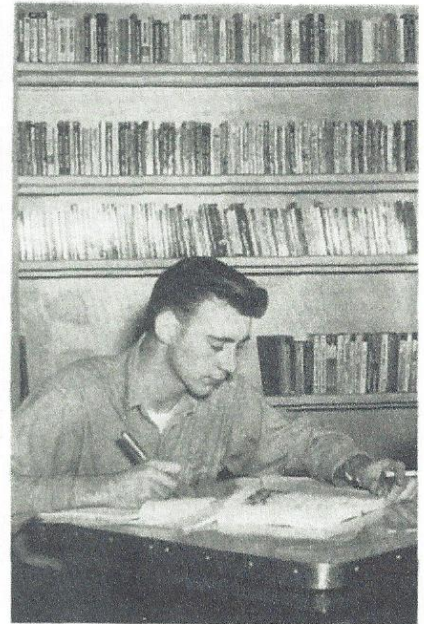
In addition to food comparable

with the best in the Navy, the mess halls of the YAGRs would be the envy of any civilian cafeteria owner. The long tables and hard benches of old have been replaced by four-place dining tables and seats cushioned with foam rubber. On the serving line, crew members help themselves. After a meal they can light up a smoke, chat, and have an extra cup of coffee. Ashtrays and napkins are often standard equipment.

One thing that may puzzle Navy-men who are familiar with these vital sea-going ships; why are the craft listed in a miscellaneous category? "YAGR," spelled out—"YAG" means a miscellaneous auxiliary and "R" stands for radar—points up the fact that this important ship is classified as a service craft.

There's an answer: the ship is supposed to look about as miscellaneous as a ship can get. Inside, it's a different story—perhaps, one day, the most important story of watchfulness ever told.

—Haywood Mitchell, JO2, USN



QUARTERS aboard YAGRs are very livable. Above: Relaxed in 'library.' Below left: 'Disc jockeys' entertain crew. Below rt: Spacious living qtrs.

