



YAGRGRAM #69 - SUMMER 2014

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2015 reunion - Charleston, South Carolina

A complete description and cost of pre-reunion and reunion tours, reunion registration form, & order forms for shirts and hats will be included in the next (fall issue) YAGRGRAM.

Memo from Lee Doyel, Chair

YAGRS has a block of rooms at the INN PLACE CHARLESTON AIRPORT HOTEL for the dates April 30, May 1 & 2 at \$100 per night. The rate is good for three (3) days 'pre' and 'post' reunion dates. Cut off date for registration is March 29, 2015.

Complete reunion registration form and instructions, details of pre-reunion and reunion tours, and order form for shirts and hats will be in the fall YAGRGRAM.

HOTEL REGISTRATION - Call 843-747-1900 or 888-747-1900 and ASK FOR THE SALES DEPT. This bypasses the central reservation hub and processes the reservation directly from the hotel. For problems registering contact Brian Forrester at 480-998-1112 or 800-998-1228. Hotel registration includes free parking and free roundtrip airport shuttle. After retrieval of luggage, contact hotel 888-747-1900 for shuttle. Also free scheduled service to Historic District and within a two mile radius of hotel, which includes Tanger Outlet Mall.

Men's Business Meeting - YAGR'S 19th Annual Reunion - May 24, 2014

Double Tree Downtown, San Antonio Texas

Chair Lee Doyel opened the meeting at 9:30 am. After several opening remarks he moved on to the meeting agenda.

Secretary's Report

Mel Harder gave the secretary's report. He reported on the maintenance of the active member list and crew lists; current membership and the issuing membership cards; and the YAGRGRAM. Currently 500 active YAGR members receive the YAGRGRAM, published three times annually.

Summer - Shortly after the annual reunion, which is usually held in May. It includes minutes of the business meeting; reunion highlights and photos; and info on upcoming reunions.

Fall - Includes full registration instructions and form, hotel reservation information, reunion shirt and hat order form, and detail description of pre-reunion and reunion tours for the upcoming reunion. It also gives the deadline date for registering.

Spring - Before the upcoming reunion. This issue also includes registration form, hotel info, shirt and hat order form and tour descriptions. This issue is sent out in time to for members to register before the deadline.

Treasurer's Report

Armand LaMarche gave the treasurer's report. He detailed his procedure for recording all checks received for dues; reunion registration; shirt, hat and ship's store orders; and donations. He discussed his procedure for paying and recording all expenses. And he presented the previous year's income and expenses by category. In summary, YAGR finances are presently in good order and accounted for. If anyone wants a copy of his financial report, please email Armand.

Chairman's Report

Lee Doyel gave the chairman's report.

Harry Miller - He informed those present that Harry Miller is now in a care facility, and passed a card around for members to sign which will be sent to Harry. If anybody wishes to send their own card to Harry, please call or email Lee for address.

web site - Frank Pulaski is the YAGR web site administrator. He posts the last two issues of the YAGRGRAM, and maintains a picture gallery by ship. Members can forward pics to Frank for posting. When email responses to the web site are received from former crew members, Frank forwards them to Lee who then emails an invitation to join YAGRS.

ships store - All artwork (ship logos, patches) has been redone. Ships logos can be viewed & downloaded from the YAGR web site. With regard to ship's patches, that is still a work in progress, due to cost and minimum order requirements. YAGR hats are available at \$18 each, which includes shipping. Hats are shipped with an envelop for payment addressed to Armand LaMarche, treasurer. All checks should be made out to YAGRS.

ship's coordinators - Lee reported that currently he still needed coordinators for the Picket (AGR-7) and the Interdictor (AGR-13). 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. George Sleeper volunteered to be coordinator for the Protector (AGR-11). If you wish to be included, please send an email to George, or any of the other ship's coordinators listed below.

AGR-1	Frank St Mark	smarks117@hotmail.com	AGR-9	Frank Mahaffey	bnf@att.net
AGR-2	Ralph Rappuhun	rrappuhn@aol.com	AGR-10	Paul Langenus	plangenus@cox.net
AGR-3	Chuck Parker	chuckparker@gmail.com	AGR-11	George Sleeper	gsleeper@roadrunner.com
AGR-4	Steve Mierzejewski	smjm@bex.net	AGR-12	Jesse Germany	jgermany31@gmail.com
AGR-5	Bob Werstler	rdwerst@sbcglobal.net	AGR-13		
AGR-6	Lee Doolittle	tleedoo@u.washington.edu	AGR-14	Joe Jackson	jacksonj@pldi.net
AGR-7			AGR-15	Lee Doyel	mldoyel@cox.net
AGR-8	Ron Stasiak	ronstasiak@rocketmail.com	AGR-16	Frank McNamara	ec2sc1@comcast.net

drawing for free room night - Lee picked a name of early reunion registrants from 22 names in a hat and awarded one free hotel night for the reunion. This years recipient was Gary Willet, USS Picket. Lee also drew a name from ship's coordinators present at the business meeting, and a free night was awarded to Frank Mahaffey. Doug Jackson, USS Searcher (AGR-4) was awarded a free night for being the very first to register.

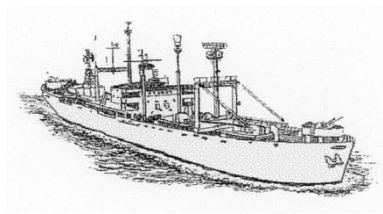
reunion attendance - total attendance at the San Antonio reunion was 121. 69 crew and 52 ladies.

USS Massachusetts Museum Display - Roland Cote maintains the exhibit, and has \$1300 remaining in the maintenance fund. YAGRS will continue to make an annual donation of \$1000 to the USS Massachusetts.

Internet listing YAGR reunions - Volunteer needed to list upcoming YAGR reunions on various military sites on the web.

2016 YAGR Reunion

Discussion was held regarding location of 2016 reunion. Lee and Brian Forrester (YAGR reunion planning consultant) discussed pros & cons of several locations and seasons for military reunions. The floor was opened for discussion and the following suggestions for 2016 made: Buffalo NY by Armand LaMarche (Lookout); Tampa FL by Jack Colgan (Skywatcher); Kissimmee FL by Rich Price (Guardian); Seattle by Bob Larkin (Skywatcher); Jacksonville FL and Branson MO by Brian Forrester. It was put to the vote and the 2016 reunion will be held in Branson MO.



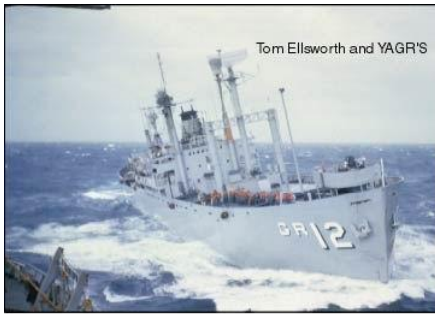
Sea Stories

Send your seas stores to Mel Harder, Secretary, at mel.harder@snet.net

From Bob Philipp - USS Vigil, AGR-12

I served aboard the USS Vigil from February 1962 to July 1964. I was certified as an air intercept controller and for most of the time was the CIC or Operations Officer. On Monday, September 22, 1962 at 1900 JFK made his public pronouncement of the "quarantine" of Cuba. At the time we were on picket, I believe on station 18, the southernmost

operational east coast station. We were coming to the end of a long and weary picket, having endured two hurricanes earlier in September. I had just qualified as OOD and had the 20-2400 watch that night. We, of course, had heard JFK's speech and were wondering what it would mean for us. We had a lookout that watch, his nickname was "waterbottle". His real name was difficult to pronounce and even more difficult to spell, so he became waterbottle to one and all. He kept reporting seeing bright flashes of light to the south. Of course we all were thinking Atom bombs? Of course it was nothing, possibly lightning. The next day we went from DEFCON 5 to DEFCON 3.



USS Vigil (AGR-12) Coming along side the USS Protector (AGR-11)

A few days later we were still on station, having been extended at sea because of the crisis and the activation of station 20, another 200 miles closer to Cuba. I had the 12-1600 watch. Because of the crisis, we had put live shells in the 3"50 gun mounts fore and aft. About 1300 the lookout in the forward mount reported smoke coming from the gun. Smoke=?fire and live ammunition. I called general quarters even before notifying the captain. The boatswain of the watch got on the 1MC and announced "Fire, fire in the forward gun mount. This is a real fire" That got everyone moving. It turned out to be just an electrical problem which the EMs were able to correct quickly and the panic was over.

One other memory. Shortly after the 22nd an ASW carrier task force steamed by headed south. The TF commander ordered us to join his convey. Since we were under NORAD control and doing what we thought was a vital mission where we were, our CO, CDR Rawson, thought that was a bad idea. But rather than trying to explain the chain of command, etc. to an admiral, he merely replied that our top speed was 11 knots. The quick reply was to the effect of "OK-stay where you are and continue present duties."

Khrushchev announced that the missiles would be removed from Cuba on Sunday October 28 and we were released and returned to Davisville sometime thereafter-a three week picket having been extended to about five weeks as I recall. In preparing this account, I referenced "To the Brink-JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis" a 2012 publication from the National Archives which is a good, factual account of the crisis, which actually began that preceding Summer when U.S. Intelligence detected Soviet military shipments to Cuba. That book has many picture, maps and copies of many of the pertinent formerly top secret documents, along with a good bibliography for anyone interested in more details.

From Ted Wilming - USS Outpost, AGR-10 and USS Skywatcher, AGR-3



While emailing another retired Chief, and reading his "sea stories " about borrowing a Shore Patrol vehicle with the keys left in the ignition...it occurred that I had one of my own. After making RD2 in October 1964, I was awarded the Shore Patrol duty at the Davisville Enlisted Club outside the main gate. This turned out to be a rather uneventful evening which was great because this was my first SP duty. At 0200, the club closed and those who were on the ships gathered inside of the main gate and waited for the bus back to the pier. There were about eight guys, and since it was winter and a little cool waiting for the bus that was way to slow, whatever was consumed at the club came into play. whoever threw the snowball that hit

the back of the head of the Marine gate guard, well that started it and by the time the Sergeant of the Guard, then the Officer of the Day were on scene things got ugly. Unfortunately I did not think to take the armband off and the OOD spotted me. I was asked if I had observed the person who perpetrated this breach of military decorum and truthfully denied any involvement. The direction I received was to take each individual to the ships quarterdeck and turn them over to the OOD and explain the circumstances (with a straight face). I never heard anything more about the incident, and as the statue of liability is long gone my question is there anyone in this group (RadRon 2) who can add some information on this dastardly deed? or better yet who will like to try out as pitcher for the Yankees.

From Kenneth R. Wehr - USS Skywatcher, AGR-3

I served on the USS Skywatcher as a DK3 from July 64 to March 65 when we were decommissioned.

I have two stories: Story 1 - The Monday before Thanksgiving we left Davisville and headed for one on the northern picket stations. Just prior to our departure the news reported that the ocean liner Independence had encountered heavy seas, some as high as 60 feet, which caused damage to lifeboats and windows. We were headed to that same general area and the seas were rough on the way to the station and on Thanksgiving we encountered 30-40 foot seas. Very few



attended our holiday meal as most were seasick, including the Capt. and the XO. Turkeys and hams in pans were flying out of the ovens on to the deck and the mess crew had all they could do to get the food back in the trays and back in the ovens and served. You really had to hold on to your trays and mugs to get through the meal to say nothing about eating fast. The seas abated the next day becoming slow ground swells instead which caused additional seasickness. Years later, while watching the movie "The Perfect Storm", it brought back fresh memories of that time. I mentioned to my wife about my experience and she remarked that she was glad she didn't know it at the time. Story 2 - At some point while on board the Skywatcher we experienced a series of thefts. One was

of strawberries or strawberry ice cream (can't remember which) and the other involved the theft of a crewman's guitar. Both occasions precipitated inspections of the entire ship including the crew's personal lockers. Nothing was found. Soon after, one of our First Class cooks was seen around the ship with a paperback book sticking out of his back pocket with the title "The Caine Mutiny" showing. It wasn't long before the XO told the cook in no uncertain terms that he didn't want to see it again and that was that.

Ladies Breakfast - Pat Reichling

San Antonio is a beautiful and friendly city and it was certainly a special reunion. A big thank you to Diane DeRiso and Carolyn Axelrod, for monitoring the auction and also collecting and distributing the articles and the money donated, for



the Family Violence Prevention Services of Bexar County, TX. In addition to the clothing and toiletries donated, we women generously donated a total of \$450!!! Sooo.... many kind and considerate ladies we had attending! I witnessed several random acts of kindness at the breakfast. Jane Burtchen gave out crocheted butterflies that she had made herself. She also gave some to our serving staff and those girls were thrilled!! One other lady wanted to purchase butterflies from Jane for her Sunday School Class. Jane would not accept any money, so the kind lady made another donation to the Violence Prevention Center!!! Another lady gave out some US flags and asked us to "plant" them randomly during our travels. Planting random flags was this lady and her husband's passion and they do so all over the US.

This was only the second year that we included a charity collection in our activities and the ladies expressed an interest in continuing to do so next year.

An update was given on Harry, Gayle as well as Nell's health situation, and all were asked to include them in their prayers. We had 4 new ladies attending this year and we were all happy that they joined us, and hope to see them again in Charleston. We sadly missed our Nell and want her back with us!! Thank you also Lee and the other members of the YAGRS for arranging the private room for the women to have our fun on Saturday morning while you all do the work!!! In a past conversation with Nell, she mentioned that the plan was to have a fall YagrGram this year and further information would be in that publication as to what charity, theme and any further activities would take place in 2015 at the LADIES BREAKFAST.

YAGR Books Available - from Joe Maurer, USS Vigil

YAGR'S BOOK ORDER

Glue Bound Book (\$19.00 each - Tax and Postage Incl.)

No. Ordered _____ Total Amt. Due _____

Ship to:

Name _____

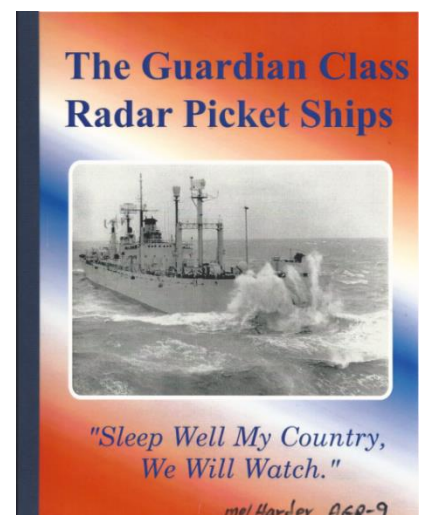
Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Detach and keep for receipt:

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

E-mail: runinmuck@yahoo.com



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, 2015. The highlighted date on your address label is the date your membership is current to. If that date is 5/31/14 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: _____

Memo from Lee Doyel, Chair - registrations, payments, ship's store

I forgot to mention it at the business meeting that all the prices for reunion tours, hotel, etc. include gratuities. It is not necessary to tip bus drivers, tour guides or other associated persons.

When ordering reunion shirts USE THE REGISTRATION FORM even if you are not attending the reunion (add \$5 for mailing). Just fill out the shirt portion only. If later you want additional shirts (as long it is before the cut off date) use another registration form. This year some were ordered by other means and caused some confusion which resulted in a shortage of some sizes. In that regard, the REGISTRATION FORM WILL BE THE DECIDING FACTOR in any questions that may rise regarding shirts, payment for tours, banquet, guest, etc. If there is something unique or different about your registration, MAKE A NOTE ON THE FORM so the Treasurer will know how to handle and credit it. I had one X-large and three XX-large left over. Reduced price. \$10 each. Be advised sizes have run large.

We are going to change the registration form so it will reflect that a member in good standing and one spouse will pay the reduced rate. That is, two persons will receive the regular registration fee. Additional guest(s) and non current member(s) will pay the higher rate. A non current member can by catching up on his dues get the lower rate for him and his guest. Widows who are current in the dues also get the lower rate. If there is a widow who cannot afford the dues cost, there is a fund to help the widow.

When paying for anything related to YAGRS (registration, tours, ship's store, etc.) ALWAYS MAKE THE CHECK OUT TO YAGRS, not to the treasurer. It causes problems otherwise.

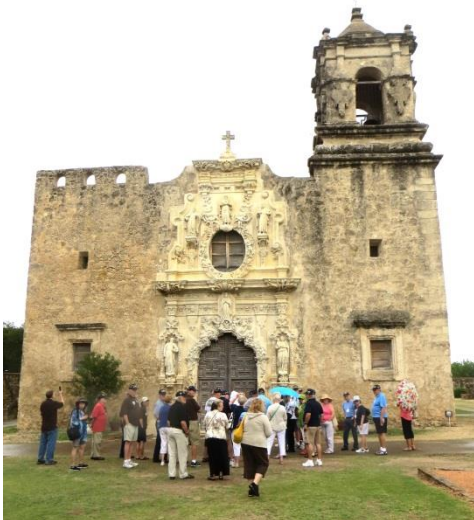
On occasion members take advantage the lower hotel rate and register at the hotel under the YAGRS room block and do not attend the reunion activities. Generally this does not cause a problem. However it can cause a problem when we run up against the maximum number of rooms we have blocked out. It means we have to ask the hotel to expand the number of rooms in our block of rooms. If this occurs before the cut off date for registration, the hotel can (at their discretion) give us more rooms. However if the hotel refuses, individuals trying to register, even before the cut off date, end up paying a higher rate. As registration at the hotel proceeds I receive a list of registrants. I check that list against the registration forms the Treasurer has received. If the lists don't match I start looking of the reason. So if you use the YAGR rate for other purposes (family reunion, vacation, etc.) than the reunion please SUBMIT A REGISTRATION FORM explaining why you used the YAGR rate. This helps upkeep things in order and from "chasing rabbits." If an individual registers on the YAGRS rate and the room block is full I may have to ask the hotel to remove you from the YAGR rate so a reunion attendee can utilize the YAGR rate. Reunion attendees have first priority to the YAGRS block of rooms. Others will be on a standby basis.

During each reunion things occur/happen which I call "HICCUPS." Some of these at this reunion were beer in bottles (required cups for outside), rain at the luncheon (had to move off the patio), 2 river boats vice 3, arriving late at the mission (different route for meg bus), reunion shirts running large in the sizes, etc.

On occasion some members arrival early for some reason or other and ask if they can be included on a tour they had not signed up for. I will try to accommodate those individuals if possible. However you must realize it will depend on the number of seats open on the bus, tour site/restaurant is able to accept an addition, etc. Naturally the individual will be expected to pay the Treasurer for the cost.

I need to make an apology to Pat and Diane De Riso who hosted this reunion. I failed to mention it at the business meeting. They provided all the snacks and kept the bowls filled. Although they live over 300 miles from San Antonio in McKinney (north of Dallas) they volunteered and came through. Proved we don't necessarily need an on site host.

San Antonio Pics



USS Guardian, AGR-1



USS LOOKOUT AGR-2



San Antonio, 2014

USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3



USS SEARCHER AGR-4



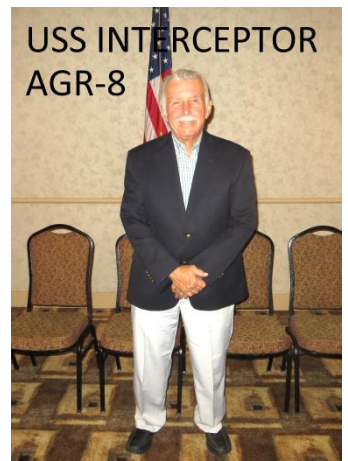
USS SCANNER AGR-5

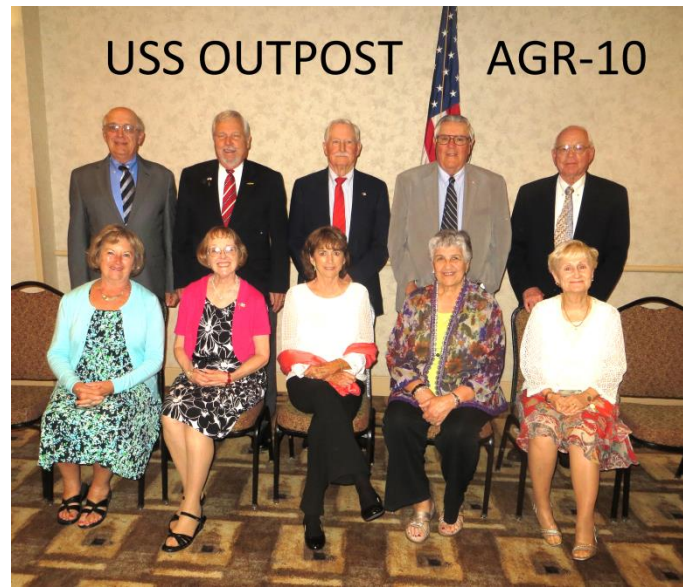


USS LOCATOR AGR-6



**USS INTERCEPTOR
AGR-8**





San Antonio, 2014

