



YAGRGRAM #75 - SUMMER 2016

Lee Doyel, 2315 Bavarian Court, Pensacola FL 32503 (850) 433-6930

view & print this YAGRGRAM in color at <http://www.yagrs.org>

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Minutes of the men's business meeting - Lee Doyel, Chair

Saturday, May 21 2016

Radisson Hotel Branson, Branson MO

The business meeting was called to order by Lee Doyel and welcomed all. There were several first timers. Fourteen of the sixteen ships were represented. There were 57 men and 53 spouses/guests for a total of 110 attending the reunion.



The Secretary's report from Mel Harder was provided in the registration packet. It reported active membership as 454 and furnished a list by ship the number of person that have been located since the Association started. That number is 2369. The cost of the YAGRGRAM is \$1.15 for mailing 1400 of them each year.

The Treasurer, Armand Lamarche, reported on last years reunion expense which showed it cost more than was taken in. This was due to it being the 20th anniversary and the various items (like Lone Sailor statutes) that were given away. The biggest expense is the YAGRGRAM. The Association again awarded \$1,000 to the USS MASSACHUSETTS (BB-59) which houses our museum. He reported the Association was in very good financial shape.

Roland Cote was not present but sent word that the museum was in good shape after being closed along with the ship for the winter.

Frank Pulaski reported on the web site which is one of the better web sites around. He recommended that the web site address be listed on the news letter right under the names and email addresses in the upper right corner of Lee, Armand and Mel.

There were only 2 coordinators present, Steve Mierzejewski (AGR-4) and Joe Jackson, (AGR-14). Richard Willhite volunteered to be the ships coordinator for the Interdictor AGR-13, which leaves only the USS Picket, AGR-7, without a ship's coordinator.

Lee explained about the ships store items which now includes challenge coins. He reiterated the frustration he was having with the vendor on the ship's patches but hopes to have it all resolved by summers end.

In general comments, Lee noted that Mike Liska was the very first person to sign up for the Branson reunion which earned him a free room night. When asked, most attendees were in their 70s with a few in their 80s with John King coming in at 89. The policy of "if YAGRS doesn't pay you don't pay" was restated noting that late sign ups will be accommodated if possible but will be on a "space available" basis. Lee noted that schedules can be very fluid during reunions and for personnel to always check for changes. Tour costs at

YAGRS reunions are all inclusive which includes tax, transportation, tips and any other costs. Due to vender lead time, reunion shirts are ordered before the cut off date (usually 5 weeks) of making hotel reservations and submitting a registration form. The hospitality industry over the past 2 to 3 years has recovered and the \$100 a room night is becoming harder to get, even for large groups. The Radisson Hotel has a long passageway with numerous plaques, pictures, articles, etc posted on the

walls. It even has a separate Medal of Honor room. The hotel stated they would put up a plaque for YAGRS if one is submitted. Lee is going to explore this and submit a design for approval by the Association.

The 2018 reunion site selected was New Orleans beating out Jacksonville FL, Buffalo NY, Tampa FL, Oklahoma City OK and Dayton OH.

Secretary's Report - Mel Harder, Secretary

Membership

Current paid up membership as of 5/4/16 is 454. The chart to right lists the current membership by hull #, and the totals for crew lists. The total for current membership by hull # is slightly higher than total current membership because some crew served on more than one ship.

If a member falls 2 years behind in dues, they are removed from the current member list.

Crew lists include names of any crew that has ever been a YAGR member. Names on crew lists are never deleted. Crew lists are updated as changes for address, phone etc. are received. The updated crew lists are sent out for printing once a year. If any member would like the most current crew list for his ship, email me at mel.harder@snet.net and I will send you an updated list.

YAGRGRAMS

YAGRGRAMS are mailed three times a year; spring, summer, fall/winter. The fall/winter and spring issues contain reunion schedule and details, hotel information, reunion registration form. The summer issue follows the annual reunion and includes minutes of the men's business meeting and a report of the womens breakfast meeting. All issues include a dues reminder and form, a list of ship's coordinators, and an order form for the YAGR BOOK.

A regular feature is SEA STORIES. Please send your seas stories to mel.harder@snet.net. You can include photos.

About 1400 YAGRGRAMS are printed & mailed to members each year. The cost per YAGRGRAM is about \$1.15, including printing and mailing costs.

Recent YAGRGRAMS are posted on the YAGR website <http://www.yagrs.org> and can be viewed/printed in color.

Membership Cards

As I receive notice of dues payment from YAGRS treasurer Armand Lamarche, I update the member list and mail out updated membership cards with crew lists.

USS Massachusetts - Donation check received and presented.

On June 8,2016 a donation of \$1000.00 from the YAGR's Association was presented by Roland Cote (AGR-10) and John Hemminger (AGR-2) to Director of Finance David Keyes representing Battleship Massachusetts.

HULL #	SHIP'S NAME	BY HULL #	BY CREW LISTS
AGR-1	USS GUARDIAN	50	190
AGR-2	USS LOOKOUT	36	164
AGR-3	USS SKYWATCHER	38	185
AGR-4	USS SEARCHER	41	178
AGR-5	USS SCANNER	29	118
AGR-6	USS LOCATOR	12	118
AGR-7	USS PICKET	15	109
AGR-8	USS INTERCEPTOR	26	137
AGR-9	USS INVESTIGATOR	25	154
AGR-10	USS OUTPOST	43	160
AGR-11	USS PROTECTOR	32	186
AGR-12	USS VIGIL	35	154
AGR-13	USS INTERDICTOR	14	87
AGR-14	USS INTERPRETER	12	91
AGR-15	USS TRACER	32	171
AGR-16	USS WATCHMAN	19	106
YR-65	YR-65	14	61
TOTALS		473	2369



2017 Reunion - full details of pre-reunion tours and reunion schedule; registration form and shirt order form will be in the next (fall) YAGRGRAM

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside

777 Waterside Dr., Norfolk, VA 23510

757-622-6664 sheraton.com/norfolk

Rate: \$109.00 + 14% room tax & a flat \$2.00 a day tax.

Dates are: May 4-6, 2017

Pre-reunion tours on: May 2-3, 2016

All reservations due by 1 April 2017

PARKING is \$5.00 a day with in and out privileges.

Complimentary breakfast with room.

15% discount on restaurant food

Hotel DOES NOT have an airport shuttle

Cab fare is about \$25.00

2017 REUNION TOURS

Tours for the Norfolk/Chesapeake reunion have been selected. Tuesday, May 2, 2017 will be an evening dinner on a 3 masted sailing "tall ship." Wednesday, May 3, 2017 will offer a choice of 1 of 2 tours. A day at Williamsburg or a 1/2 day at Virginia Beach. Friday will be a tour of the Naval Base with lunch onboard the Spirit of Norfolk. Details of each tour will be in the fall YAGRGRAM.

Branson Ladies Breakfast - Pat Reichling (PARreichling@aol.com)

Branson is a great city everyone is so friendly!! Enjoyed it very much. The breakfast was a lot of fun. The penny auction was a great success and lots of lovely things laid out on the table. Jane Burtchin's crocheted dolls are always coveted. Jane was

so kind and gifted each of us with a little angel crocheted ornament. Barbara/USS Picket, Connie USS Tracer, Jane of the USS Scanner handled the auction this year. JOB WELL DONE!!!!

The YAGRS Ladies continue to be generous to the VA facilities and \$605 in cash and gift cards was

collected, along with a variety of tee shirts, socks, loungers, toiletries, ladies nighties, some games, etc. Cheri/USS Locator was our banker and collected the donation money.

Unfortunately we were not able to leave our donations in the Branson area this year, as we had planned, so the donations collected were given to the Charleston VA Hospital.

We convinced two nice men and a lady who were in the hotel for another Navy reunion to be our Country Western contest judges. I am sorry I did not record the names of the ladies that won the trophies. If anyone remembers please email me, as I would like to mention them in the next newsletter. We will look forward to Suzanne Atig's photos. They are always wonderful.



Hospitality Room



photos by Suzanne Attig

Tracer Battle Efficiency award recovered

Lee Doyel

Thanks to our web site, just prior to the Branson reunion I received an email from a lady (Sally White) wondering about the plaque shown below. Subsequent correspondence revealed that her father (who was a truck driver) found it along a highway in Pennsylvania 20 years ago leaning up against a guard rail post. That is 30 years after the squadron and ships were decommissioned. She was wondering if it had any monetary value. I told her just for the brass content but there was more a sentimental value attached to it and offered to buy it from her plus shipping cost for the YAGRS museum. We wonder who "appropriated" it and where was it for the 30 years before being found and how did it get on the road side. At any rate, Mrs. White said her father would like to donate it to YAGRS and she and her husband would pay the postage for shipping. I took it to Branson where it was displayed in the hospitality room. The plaque was a "Battle Efficiency" award given to the USS Tracer (AGR-15). Amazing those old

photo by Suzanne Attig



Tracer crew in Branson with Battle Efficiency Award



ships could have a battle efficiency rating, assuming they would still be afloat after a war started. The Tracer received the award two years in a row and here is a picture of Captain Reid receiving the award from RADM Taylor, Commander Western Sea Frontier. The plaque was in good shape except for some scratches and being slightly bent on the lower right corner apparently from hitting the highway when it fell from what ever was transporting it. It is also amazing it had not been melted down for scrap during the 50 plus years after being "appropriated." Thanks to **Gerald G. Zimmerman**, another aspect of YAGRS has been recovered.



ship's coordinators - 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. If you wish to be included, send an email to your ship's coordinator.

AGR-1	Frank St Mark	smarks117@hotmail.com
AGR-2	Ralph Rappuhun	rrappuhn@aol.com
AGR-3	Chuck Parker	chuckparker@gmail.com
AGR-4	Steve Mierzejewski	smjm@bex.net
AGR-5	Bob Werstler	rdwerst@sbcglobal.net
AGR-6	Lee Doolittle	tleedoo@u.washington.edu
AGR-7		
AGR-8	Ron Stasiak	ronstasiak@rocketmail.com

AGR-9	Frank Mahaffey	bnf@att.net
AGR-10	Paul Langenus	plangenus@cox.net
AGR-11	George Sleeper	gsleeper@roadrunner.com
AGR-12	Jesse Germany	jgermany31@gmail.com
AGR-13	Richard Willhite	willys55nut@comcast.net
AGR-14	Joe Jackson	jacksonj@pldi.net
AGR-15	Lee Doyel	mldoyel@cox.net
AGR-16	Frank McNamara	ec2sc1@comcast.net

Dues Payment - Mel Harder, secretary
dues are \$17/year - make checks out to YAGRS ASSOCIATION
mail to Armand Lamarche, Treasurer, 3 Finnway St., North Billerica MA 01862

The current membership year ends May 31, 2017. The highlighted date on your address label is the date your current membership is good through. If that date is **5/31/16** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive an updated 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: _____

AGR Books Available - from Joe Maurer, USS Vigil

YAGR'S BOOK ORDER

Mail order is \$20.00 each, that includes postage.

No. Ordered _____ Total Amt. Due _____

Name _____

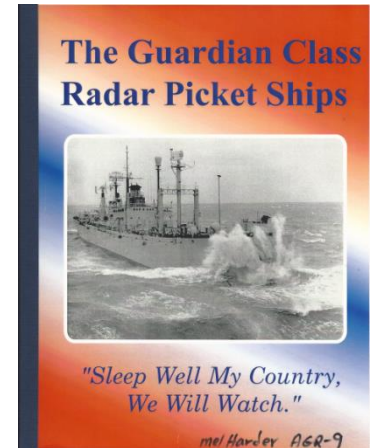
Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Detach and keep for receipt:

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

E-mail: runinmuck@yahoo.com

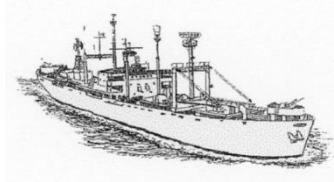


photos by
Suzanne Attig



Sea Stories

Please send your sea stories to mel.harder@snet.net.



Submitted by Ralph Tucker, EM2, USS Outpost AGR-10

I was stationed at Harbor Defense in Little Creek, Virginia before going to the USS Outpost. Most people don't realize that we had a shore controlled mine field across the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay in the 1960's. These mines were about 4 to 5 foot in diameter and 3 to 4 foot high. Each was connected by a network of 1 1/2" diameter cables with about 21 wires to the control station on shore. It use to take the minemen about four hours to make a splice.

The mines were all controlled from Fort Story in Virginia Beach. When I was there, the triggers were not in the mines but the field could have been activated in less then 24 hours. There were acoustic devices to pick up any underwater sounds that weren't supposed to be there. Fort Story and Fishermans Island on the North side had observation post so they knew what should be going through the entrance. The deepest part of the entrance was 93 feet. Harbor Defense had a dive boat with seven

divers who did scuba in the summer and hard hat in the winter. The duty electrician had to ride one of the five 65' mine planters in case any of the boats had an electrical problem. It was great to get out of the shop every week or two and spend a day on the water. Only close call I had was when they drove the first ceremonial piling for the new Chesapeake Bay bridge. We were returning to Little Creek from the mine field in a blinding snow storm using only the gyro compass. All of a sudden there is this huge piling dead in front of us, The 2nd class BM was able to miss it by at least a foot. We had all the material to put a submarine net across the entrance. One summer they practiced installing a couple sections of net. One of the mine planters had to sit on the net so no one would run into it. That was "rough" duty, fishing and swim call all day. The only thing I regret is I never took a picture the whole two years I was there.

Submitted by Bob Wiltshire, ET2, U.S.S Lookout AGR2

Thought I would send you a SEA STORY about what happened aboard the U.S.S. Lookout in about 1960/61. That was about 55 years ago and this is how I remember it.

We were nearing the end of one of our tours and this time, for the first time, we were going to a port somewhere other than Davisville. (I think it was Halifax) . It was about 2 PM, two days before we were to be relieved. The aft 3 inch gun was going to be fired and as usual, when the gun was going to be fired, the SPS 8 radar was shut down.

Everyone went to the assigned firing stations, and as the gun was fired there was an unscheduled blackout on the ship. I was in the ET shop in mid ship. I was immediately called that the SPS 17 (long range radar) went down leaving us with no long range radar. I went towards the SPS 17 radar room , it was filled with smoke and a burning smell.



FYI, the SPS 17 had an oil cooled main power output, and the oil was cooled by flowing salt water. When the gun was fired, a salt water line in the oil cooler burst sending salt water all over the electronics causing electrical shorts so bad that the main circuit breakers welded shut instead of tripping. The over current problem went all the way back to the main generators on the ship. Now with the only long range radar down, we had to get the SPS 8 back up fast as we were still on station. When that was accomplished, (firing of the guns was stopped), I went to analyze the SPS 17 problem. There was so much damage , water and electrical , that it was hard to find where to start. But we knew we had to get it back up as soon as possible.

At that time we had 5 ET's on board. As I recall it was myself, I was an ET2, 3 ET3s, and an ETN. With this



emergency, myself, Jim Ebersol, and Pete Lounsberry started working on the problem. We had a BT put a new waterline in the cooler, then we started the electrical. With so many wires and parts burned, we started scratching through the spare parts, we had to scavenge some working units to get parts and cables. Another problem was slipping on the rubber flooring with it soaked with oil. The 3 of us worked through the night, all the next day and finally, at about 5 in the morning on the second day we had the SPS 17 up and running. We hit the sack, it was about 46 hours of non sleep. My bunk was next to the outside bulkhead. I had just about got to sleep when I heard the ships alarm. As you know the normal routine was to test the alarms every morning. However, as I listened, realized that this alarm was

COLISION. Then I thought about the relieving ship bringing out our mail and I was next to the bulkhead, and the Collision siren. I was out of the rack so fast and out to the center passage way before I put my dungarees on !!!!!

End result is there was a boat transfer, the ocean was like a sheet of glass, and apparently someone wasn't watching what was happening, and by the time it was realized that we were going to collide, it was too late to stop it. We ran into the other AGR, causing damage, although minor, to both ships. It also ended our chance to get to another port and we went back to Davisville for repairs. We did get a "job well done " from the Captain, but never got to Hailifax.

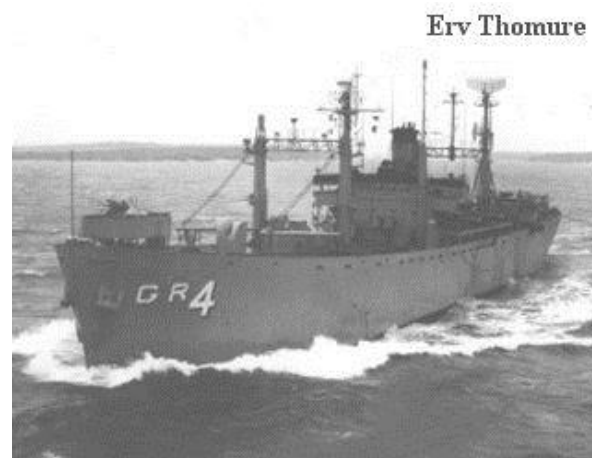
Bob Wiltshire ET2 1957-1961

submitted by Gordon L. Broome USS Seacher AGR-4 1958 - 1962

We were on station in the mid atlantic around 1960, when we got caught in a bad hurricane several miles north of Bermuda. (See classypages.com/Searcher) The hurricane was so bad that 60 ft. waves were encountered. I was an ET working in CIC where the SPA-8 repeaters were getting

vibrated repeatedly, as was everything else onboard, every time the screw would come out of the water. The tubes in the repeater had grids that would sometimes short out as the lay horizontal in the unit. (this was before transistors, etc.) The tubes were taking a beating when one of the units went

down. I uncovered the repeater, cranked it down, and opened it up for service, and sat cross-legged with my trouble lite. Meanwhile, up on the bridge, the Captain, afraid that we were entering too close to Bermuda waters,



and afraid of running aground, attempted to change course and, without us being previously warned, got caught in the trough of a huge wave, which resulted in a 57 degree roll, almost capsizing the ship. When that occurred, I was catapulted off the deck, backwards, and landed into RD-2 Lopez, who was sprawled against the plotting table and the force cracked three of his ribs. A lot of other things happened at that time resulting in a massive cleanup and a lot of repair work. I remember having just soup and sandwiches for days afterwards. Petty officer Lopez avoided me for the rest of the cruise, poor guy, as he had to be in constant pain, what with a constant rolling ship. He also had some choice names for me.



Member Correspondence

from: Ray Huther, Scanner - '57/'58

Great job by all those holding the association together. Please pass on my thanks. There is reference to 3" 50mm shells in the last newsletter. That is not a correct description - 3 inches is the bore and the length of the barrel is 3 inches x 50 or 150". There is no millimeter measurement. For example, battleships have/had 16" 50's and the barrel (if that is what they are/were called) is 800 inches long - 66.66+ feet. Naval guns are still designated that way unless the bore is in millimeters. Incidentally, I was on the new USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) last week in the BAE shipyard in Jacksonville and it has a millimeter gun in the bow - a Mk 110 57mm (2 plus inch bore).



Pins - if you have a pin not shown, please email a photo to mel.harder@snet.net



1st Reunion
Newport, RI 1996

2nd Reunion
Baltimore, MD 1997

3rd Reunion
Charleston, SC 1998

4th Reunion
Norfolk, VA 1999

5th Reunion
Minneapolis/St. Paul 2000



6th Reunion
San Diego, CA 2001

7th Reunion
Newport, RI 2002

8th Reunion
Pensacola, FL 2003



9th Reunion
Philadelphia, PA 2004



10th Reunion
San Francisco, CA (San Mateo) 2005



11th Reunion
St. Louis, MO 2006



12th Reunion
Washington, DC 2007



13th Reunion
Warwick, RI 2008



14th Reunion
San Diego, CA 2009



15th Reunion
Carnival Cruise 2010
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

16th Reunion
Nashville, TN 2011



17th Reunion
Lancaster, PA 2012

18th Reunion
Tucson, AR 2013



19th Reunion
San Antonio, TX 2014



20th Reunion
Charleston, SC 2015



21st Reunion
Branson, MO 2016

22nd Reunion
Chesapeake, VA 2017