

USS ROCHESTER (CA-124)



Association



Vol. II, No. 05

News Letter

February 2006

Branson, Missouri Show Update

As can occasionally and unfortunately occur, one of the shows listed on the reunion itinerary will not be performing; *50s at the Hop* has altered its show schedule and will not be performing an 8:00pm show on **Sunday, October 1, 2006**. This show is listed as one of your two optional shows for that time period.

We are replacing October 1, 2006 8:00pm 50s at the Hop option @ \$25.00 per person to Mickey Gilley at 8:00pm @ \$25.00 per person. We need to ensure USS Rochester members phoning their reservations in are aware of the change in venue, and that revised information is included in final agenda.

Sea Cadet of the Year

On Saturday at the January 7th drill PO2 Brian Halik was promoted to PO1. (A job well done I may add) Then on Sunday January 8th he received another well earned honor at final muster with his proud parents in attendance PO1 Halik received a citation naming him the 2005 Rochester CA124 Division Sea Cadet of the Year. The cadet of the year is chosen by the officers of the unit and selection is made on attendance, military bearing, leadership, demeanor, initiative, and contribution to the unit and acceptance of responsibility. Petty Officer Halik met all requirements with flying colors. He is a credit to the Naval Sea Cadets and to his parents. At the Navy League Rochester Council Recognition dinner on 9 February, Petty Officer Halik will be presented the Navy League Youth Metal and Ribbon by the councils president Patricia Greco. Bravo Zulu Petty Officer Halik!

Greetings From The Royal Navy

I was invited aboard USS Rochester several times in Hong Kong while serving in HMS Salisbury, 1959 – 1961. My mate and I played guitar a bit, and were invited to meet some of Rochester's crew who played. I can't remember names, but one guy we only saw the once, apparently he went ashore in Hong Kong, and returned with a half bottle of whiskey tucked down his boot. The officer of the watch found it, and said, "Ill turn my back and I want to hear a splash" He did hear a splash, but it wasn't the whiskey. The OOW checked again, found the whiskey and the guy was under punishment. Pity, he was a brilliant guitarist.

We invited several of your guys round at tot time, to share a tot, my love of country music stems from listening to guys on the Rochester. Sorry to hear she was scrapped, Salisbury ended her days sunk as a target for an Exocet missile.

When the Falklands war started, the wife and I had gone down to London to see of all things "Evita". When we came out of the theatre there were signs all over London, HMS Hermes' all leave cancelled return to your ship, HMS Hecate ditto, both "Old ships" I felt really guilty, I felt I should be going too but they managed quite well without silly old buggers like me.

If any of those old guitar players are still around give them my regards, and every success to USS Rochester website.

Eric Beechill Ex AB Radar HMS Salisbury

If anyone recalls this incident and would like to contact Mr. Beechill at Ericbeechill@aol.com

From Secondary Con

Garry Phillips

The Association has come into some good fortune through the offices of the Naval Historical Center in Washington. We found out that the Center had stored about 200 deck planks from the ROCHESTER for presentation – first to plank owners and then crew members of the ROCHESTER. Joe Hill contacted the Center and they shipped the planks to him through the Cookeville, TN National Guard Depot. On my way though Tennessee, I stopped by Joe's place and looked at the planks. Most of them are 48 inches in length and a full 2"x4" in width and depth. Some of the planks are damaged from being removed from the deck, but most are in fairly good shape otherwise. Most of the planks have 3 holes approximately one and a half inches in diameter through which the plank was fastened to the metal deck.

Practically every plank has glue on its back (down) side and a heavy paste on each of its two sides. We have found that the only safe way to remove the gunk from the planks is to carefully scrape it off. Then, to clean them up, you can use a fine planer or a sander, or both. Joe and I have each contacted several individuals who are involved with woodworking. The usual answer is a groan and a headshake after seeing the glue and paste on the boards. A chemist at a paint store told me that any solvent strong enough to take the gunk off would not be good for the wood and may ruin it.

I took one of the boards and cleaned it with a putty knife and woodworking tool, which took about 45 minutes. I then planed the four sides. It presents a more finished appearance, but some shipmates may prefer the “rugged” look.

The Naval Historical Center prohibits the sale of the planks for any reason. They must be given to crew members. Their instructions are clear on this point. Since we have almost 500 active members of the Association, we will have to cut the planks into three pieces in order to have enough to go around. The three pieces may work out pretty well considering where the grommet holes are located in the boards. Most of the planks will be 16" pieces.

Long story short, we have batted this around the Association's officers and have come up with a workable solution. We will bring enough pieces to Branson to give every shipmate present a “piece of the Roch.” We will also give everyone a certificate of authenticity to go with it. Those of you who are members of the Association who want a plank and who are not at the reunion will be given an opportunity or order one from the Ship's Store. You will only have to pay postage and shipping.

So, come to Branson and get your original, 100% bona fide plank from the deck of the ROCHESTER. We're excited about this, and we hope you are too.

Chaplain's Corner

Frank West, Chaplain

THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDS

A beautiful campground among scenic redwood trees along the Northern California coast is where I spent January 10-12. It is a place where I have met with friends at times for the past 45 years. As I thought of the trees, I was reminded how they have deep roots that intertwine with one another to give strength to withstand the storms that come. The friends with me have stood by me in the storms I have had to face over the years.

I was reminded of the friends that were formed while on the Rochester. I met one that assisted me in getting transferred to the “R” Division. A training officer assisted me by letting me use his stateroom to take a GED test, which made it possible to enter college when discharged. Numerous friendship relationships were formed while on the “Roc” which are mutually beneficial.

“A man that hath friends must show himself friendly” is a statement from Proverbs. Proverbs also states, “A friend loveth at all times”. When Jesus was talking to his disciples he stated, “I have called you friends”. Maintaining friendships requires effort. Phone calls, letters, E-mail and visits are part of the effort. Work at it. You will find the results very rewarding.

A Bit Of Trivia, A Letter to Joe Hill

I just wanted to wish you a happy holiday season and pass along a bit of trivia for what it is worth.

The time that I served aboard was mostly doing reserve cruises. For some reason when I got in front of a microphone my voice changes completely, very clear and slow. The Exec liked it so much that I was relieved from standing watches so that I could be instantly available to announcements special orders and announcements. Doing reserve cruises there were a lot of these. I was never called by name but "sailmaker lay up to the quarter deck-bridge" whatever. A lot of reservists would rush up to see what a sailmaker looked like. I think that they expected to see a bearded old man. Since many of them had never seen an ocean or been aboard a ship before, I think that some of them were wondering if we really rigged sails. Very few men that I served with ever knew my real name. I was dubbed "sails".

Anyhow the trivia is this: I was regular Navy signed up for a six year hitch but the powers that be decided to release me a year early. I was at the Philly Naval Station getting ready to sign the final papers when the Chief Yeoman came out and told me that the Cmdr. in charge wanted to see me. I thought, oh oh they changed the plans and I was going to serve the last year after all. I walked into his office and he looked at me a bit funny. He told me that he had expected an older man, "as usual". Anyhow he just wanted to shake my hand. At this point I was completely confused. Shake my hand?? Then he told me that he had looked over my records and had done some checking. As far as he could determine I was the last rated sailmaker-rigger in the US Navy. He just wanted to be able to say that he shook hands with the last one in the service, as there would never be another. If this be true or not I have no idea, but who was I to doubt the words of a man of his rank. I have to admit, true or not I liked the distinction. For what it is worth, that's my story.

Anyhow, again I hope that you have a happy holiday and may 2006 be smooth sailing for all of our shipmates.

*Best Regards, Andy "Sails" Anderson
28 Starboard Drive, Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-9643*

Membership & Mailing Information

Cookeville, TN - The Association runs on its active membership. However there are still a good many shipmates who have not renewed their membership for the year 2005. On your address label, after your name is the year your dues were last paid. If it shows 05 you are behind on your dues. PLEASE PAY UP, AS YOUR 06 DUES IS DUE NOW.

If your address, phone number, or e-mail address changes, let Joe Hill know. The last News Letter that was sent out there was seven returned because of the Post Office being unable to deliver. Most were due to "forward time expired".

If you have both a Winter and Summer address let Joe Hill know so that your News Letters and other information will be sent to you on time.

Joe Hill can be reached at 4011 Ditty Road, Cookeville, TN 38505-7663. Phone 913 432 4848; FAX 931 432 2534. E-mail is joehill@multipro.com. See inside back cover of this News Letter.

The following members have been dropped from the rolls of the Association this past year because of NON PAYMENT of dues. If you know any of these shipmates please contact them and have them rejoin. Our membership is shrinking, we need to get our members back.

Berten H. Arnold	John D. Brittain
Frank E. Connolly, Jr.	Harry L. Croneberger
Charles L. Dorsey	James D. Ensinger
Pedro "Pete" Flores	Melvin J. Hermansen
Cecil T. Jernigan	Richard J. Jerome
John R. Jurisich	Marvin R. Keeler USMC
Thomas E. Lynch	James L. Moore
Dr. Robert J. Oberst, Sr.	Lehn T. Ouzts
John Rigoni	Richard E. Rogers
Michael A. Rojo, Sr.	John S. San Marco, Jr.
Russell Sargeant	Larry A. Schooler
Harold G. Scott	Robert R. Sells*
Ronald K. Shorts USMC	Frank H. Spittle
Joseph F. Steiner	James H. Waddey
CAPT John A. Webster, USN C.O. of Rochester	
Leonard J. Wenyon	Leonard B. Woody
Glen B. Yates	

* Plank Owner

Bombing of the USS Rochester

The following is an account of that fateful morning in Inchon Harbor from two of the shipmates that were aboard that day.

I had the 0400-0800 generator watch and it was hot in the fireroom. I was standing under the vent when I felt the concussion. My first reaction was that the 5-inch guns had just fired and I wondered what they might be shooting at that time of the morning. When the next one went off, the ship shook, paint chips and dust filled the fireroom. I looked at the meters on the switchboard and saw that my generator was losing speed. I thought the violent vibrations might have snapped the high-pressure steam lines. I called the other fireroom and told the watch stander to pick up the speed on his generator so that we would not lose the electrical load on the ship. GQ was sounding by now and when relieved I went to my GQ station.

I learned later that the vibration had tripped the overspeed trip on the generator, which was reset by the machinists. We saw later that one of the bombs had ricocheted off the crane. Had the crane been trained outboard perhaps the bomb might have set off the aviation gasoline which we carried for the helicopter and the Rochester might still be in Inchon harbor. Word was that the young Ensign OD thought a plane was coming in for a mail drop

As recalled by Frank Dayak, E Division.

I had the IC room watch, and I believe Jack Earwood and two guys from the power shop came down and we were playing pinochle. Remember this was the first time we had not set watertight doors or had down to dusk alerts. At just before reveille, a bomb went off outside the compartment; at least it felt like it. All of a sudden cards were flying everywhere and all the alarms were going off. The other guys headed to their GQ stations.

The diesel auxiliary started and while I waited to be relieved I reset all the systems. When my relief got there, I started up to my GQ station. A second bomb went off and bounced us around. We were not sure at first what was happening. As I

reached the hatch for the main deck, the last one exploded and lifted the fantail. My GQ station was main deck aft repair party.

When I stuck my head through the hatch on the main deck I saw large pieces of shrapnel all over the deck. I remember four bombs going off and I felt we were very lucky that the pilot was a poor bombardier or he could have dropped on down the stack. If the crane hadn't been raised the night before the last one would have hit the aviation fuel tank or either the powder and ammo rooms for the quad forties on either side of the fantail.

As recalled by Cy Bombard, E Division.

New Members

We wish to welcome aboard (again) the new USS Rochester Association members:

Harold G. Buckner, MM3, M Division
Scott City, MO. DOB 59-61
Anthony J. Monte, GM3, 5th Division
West Haven, CT. DOB 48-49
Lambert "Bert" Post, ET2, OE Division
Hemet, CA. DOB 59-61
Gilbert "Tony" A. Roberts, SK3, S1,2, 3 Division
Westalnd, MI. DOB 55-58

Association Officers

Garry L. Phillips, President	Richard Becker, Executive VP
Gordon W. Cargill, 1 st VP	Bart Bartholomew, 2 nd VP
Joseph S. Hill, Sec./Treasurer	Frank West, Chaplain
James Young, MAA	Larry Stone, Storekeeper

This newsletter is published quarterly by the USS ROCHESTER Association. The Association's officers encourage questions and comments. You may contact the Editor by writing Gordon Cargill
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Once A Sailor

The Navy

I liked standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe -- the destroyer beneath me feeling like a living thing as her engines drove her swiftly through the sea.

I liked the sounds of the Navy - the piercing trill of the boatswain's pipe, the syncopated clangor of the ship's bell on the quarterdeck, the harsh squawk of the IMC, and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

I liked Navy vessels -- nervous darting destroyers, plodding fleet auxiliaries and amphibs, sleek submarines and steady solid aircraft carriers.

I liked the proud names of Navy ships: Midway, Lexington, Saratoga, Coral Sea, Antietam, Valley Forge -- memorials of great battles won and tribulations overcome.

I liked the lean angular names of Navy "tin-cans" and escort--Barney, Dahlgren, Mullinix, McCloy, Damato, Leftwich, Mills--mementos of heroes who went before us. And the others--San Jose, San Diego, Los Angeles, St. Paul, and Chicago--named for our cities.

I liked the tempo of a Navy band blaring through the topside speakers as we pulled away from the oiler after refueling at sea.

I liked liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port. I even liked the never ending paperwork and all hands working parties as my ship filled herself with the multitude of supplies, both mundane and to cut ties to the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe where there was water to float her.

I liked sailors, officers and enlisted men from all parts of the land, farms of the Midwest, small towns of New England, from the cities, the mountains and the prairies, from all walks of life. I trusted and depended on them as they trusted and depended on me - for professional competence, for comradeship, for strength and courage. In a word, they were shipmates," then and forever.

I liked the surge of adventure in my heart, when the word was passed: "Now set the special sea and anchor detail - all hands to quarters for leaving port," and I liked the infectious thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands of welcome from family and friends waiting pier side.

The work was hard and dangerous; the going rough at times; the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the "all for one and one for all" philosophy of the sea was ever present.

I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship's work, as flying fish flitted across the wave tops and sunset gave way to night.

I liked the feel of the Navy in darkness - the masthead and range lights, the red and green navigation lights and stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters - they cut through the dusk and joined with the mirror of stars overhead. And I liked drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad noises large and small that told me that my ship was alive and well, and that my shipmates on watch would keep me safe.

I liked quiet midwatches with the aroma of strong coffee -- the lifeblood of the Navy permeating everywhere.

And I liked hectic watches when the exacting minuet of haze-gray shapes racing at flank speed kept all hands on a razor edge of alertness.

I liked the sudden electricity of "General quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations," followed by the hurried clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of water-tight doors as the ship transformed herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful workplace to a weapon of war -- ready for anything.

And I liked the sight of space-age equipment manned by youngsters clad in dungarees and sound-powered phones that their grandfathers would still recognize.

I liked the traditions of the Navy and the men and women who made them. I liked the proud names of Navy heroes: Halsey, Nimitz, Perry, Farragut, John Paul Jones and Burke. A sailor could find much in the Navy: comrades-in-arms, pride in self and country, mastery of the seaman's trade. An adolescent could find adulthood. In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods - the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, a refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom and chief's quarters and mess decks.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their Navy days, when the seas belonged to them and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

Remembering this, they will stand taller and say..."I WAS A SAILOR ONCE!!!"

*Submitted by Joe Hill
Author Unknown*

Ship's Store

Greetings from your Ship's Store. We hope all of you and yours had good Holidays.

There are a couple small pieces of news this issue. First, effective with this newsletter the price of the coffee cups, \$12.00, will be shipping inclusive. A separate shipping charge will not apply to your order of coffee cups.

Second, watch this space for the "USS Rochester Trivia Contest." We are asking everyone to submit a few trivia questions for the next two newsletters. The answers will be posted in the Ship's Store at the Branson Reunion. There will be prizes, First, Second, and Third for the members with the most correct answers. We hope you all will take a minute to jot down a question or two (with the answer, please). We are hoping that the questions will cover all the divisions on the ship as well as most of its years in service.

Remember, this would be a good time to get a couple sweatshirts and windbreakers. Even though we've all been receiving seed catalogs, Spring is a while away yet.

See you in Branson !!

TAPS

The following shipmates were reported to have passed away recently. If anyone has additional or different information, please let us know.

<u>Name</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>Yr</u>	<u>Div</u>	<u>OnBd</u>
William A. Doyle	MA	2005	T	46-47*
Carl R. Hennenfent	CA	2005	R	54-58
Gilbert Karmun	AK	2005	5 th	55-58
Charles A. Peil	TX	2005	1 st	51-52
Frederick G. Powers	CT	2005	S-2	48-53
Karl T. Swanson	CA	2005	Ch Engr	58-60
Robert J. Vidimos	IN	2005	K	52-55

**Plank Owner*

USS Rochester Trivia Contest

The Ship's Store is going to sponsor a USS Rochester Trivia Contest. We'd like to ask you all to take a few minutes to jot down any questions you feel appropriate. (Please also provide us the answers.) We're hoping to include questions from each Division and to cover as many years of the Ship's life as possible. If there are some "stump the dealer" questions, folks might collaborate on the answers. Anything to spark some interest (and have some fun swapping some stories that these questions might bring to mind) could be a good thing.

Our goal is to include a different set in each of the next 2 Newsletters. The prizes (First, Second, Third) for the most correct answers will be awarded in Branson. The Ship's Store has 3 brand new US flags that were donated some years ago. We're thinking of using one or all of these as prizes.

We hope you will take the time over the next month or so to drop us a note with your questions. The more the merrier.

Thanks for your help with this.

*Ship's Storekeeper,
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Help Our Overseas Service Personnel

Pray for them.
