

# USS ROCHESTER (CA-124)

Association

Vol. I, No. 19

## News Letter

May 2003

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## Reunion in San Diego

Thanks to the hard work of **Gordon Cargill**, our man on the ground in San Diego; his crew of associates - including (especially) his daughter; and **Bart Bartholomew**, the 2004 USS ROCHESTER reunion is off to a roaring start. First, the dates are September 28 through October 3, 2004. This is a little longer than previous reunions, but since it is the first on the West Coast, we thought it would be appropriate to provide a little more time for visiting old haunts and hanging out together. It is important to realize that it is not mandatory or even necessary to be present every day, if you don't want to. You can choose your days. This is also the dates for San Diego's "Fleet Week," a special annual celebration for the Navy. (The President and most of the officers of the Association will be there the entire week.)

The location for the reunion will be the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel in sunny San Diego. Borrowing from their web-site, they say: "Set amidst tropical palms and lush, inviting gardens, the Hanalei Hotel's intimate atrium setting is the perfect place for your stay in the heart of San Diego. The Red Lion Hanalei Hotel is conveniently located in Mission Valley, close to all the city's finest attractions. With a new look and upgraded amenities, the Hanalei is the ideal backdrop for your vacation, ..." Rooms are \$100.55 per day. All rooms have a small refrigerator and microwave. Shipmates will need to make their own reservations with the Hotel beginning early next year. We will let you know in a later newsletter when to start making reservations.

We will also have more specific information in the next newsletter.

As in the past, we have some great tours planned, with a lot of Navy stuff thrown in for old time's sake. The best part about any reunion is seeing old friends and sharing memories of days gone by. Don't let this opportunity slip away.

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### 2003 MEMBERSHIP DUES

*Cookeville, TN*--- Membership dues cover the period 1 January through 31 December. If you haven't signed up for 2003, please do so as soon as possible. 2004 dues may be forwarded now if desired. You may also pay two years in advance. The association operates from these dues and it is hoped everyone will renew on time to save on the mailing of reminders. If you are not sure about when you last paid your dues, **Joe Hill** will be glad to verify with you. Joe can be reached at 4011 Ditty Road, Cookeville, TN 38506-7663. Phone (931) 432-4848; FAX (931) 432-2534. If there is a question, you can contact **Joe**, at the address above. His e-Mail is: [joehillsr@multipro.com](mailto:joehillsr@multipro.com). Joe will also provide members' addresses and phone numbers upon request.

*Looking for a Boatswain* – We have the pipe. All we need is a Boatswain's mate at the next reunion to ensure its proper use. Any volunteers?

*San Diego in 2004!*

## Ship's Store

We're looking for someone with some business experience (or SK experience) who would like to dedicate a few hours a month to running the Ship's Store. If you would like to give it a try, please contact me or one of the Association's officers and let us know.

Right now, the Ship's Store is with **Garry Phillips** in Arlington, Virginia. He needs some help with this, so feel free to jump right in there and take over! Please note the change of address on the order form.

## NOTES

*Boyertown, Pa.* - We received a note recently from **Maria Moyer** of Boyertown, Pa., informing us of the passing of her husband, **Floyd (Red) Moyer**, on November 28, 2002. She said, "He spent time with his Navy buddy **Richard Pincin** of Halifax, remembering their days together aboard the Rochester." Maria, thank you for your note, and the many shipmates of Red with remember him with fondness, and will share your sorrow.

*San Antonio, Tx.* – My friend **Diego Peña** sent me a note along with the OI/K Division newsletter, which he so ably puts together. OI/K has reunions on the off years of the Association's reunions. This year, they were in Louisville, Ky., at the event hosted by **Don and Shera Lish**. Good to hear from you, Diego. OI/K: Way to go!

*Baghdad* – The former Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed Sakhaf, whom some of you may remember as "**Baghdad Bob**," was nothing, if not entertaining. Some of us even miss him for his penchant for mis-information, or at least skewed information. A *Washington Post* article by Anne Schroeder put together some of his most memorable

quotes shortly before and during the brief conflict. They include:

- "There is no presence of American infidels in the city of Baghdad."
- "We butchered the force present at the airport."
- "After we finish defeating all of those animals we will disclose that with facts and figures." Then, there's my favorite
- "The infidels are committing suicide by the hundreds on the gates of Baghdad."

I just wanted you to know how badly we lost the war!

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## Chaplain's Corner

*Proverbs 3:5-10*

**T**rust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

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## Association Officers

Garry L. Phillips, President	Robert A. Litts, Secretary
Richard Becker, Executive VP	James Young, MAA
Bart Bartholomew, 2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	Dennis Winkle, 1st VP
Joseph S. Hill, Treasurer	Frank West, Chaplain
William Hummel, Storekeeper	John A. Turner, Mbrship (Hon)

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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 Garry Phillips, 5731 4<sup>th</sup> Street South, Arlington, VA.

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Phrase of the Day  
**DEVIL TO PAY**

Today, the expression “devil to pay” is used primarily to describe having an unpleasant result from some action that has been taken, as in someone has done something they shouldn’t have and, as a result, “There will be the devil to pay”. Originally, this expression described one of the unpleasant tasks aboard a wooden ship.

The “devil” was the wooden ship’s longest seam in the hull. Caulking was done with “Pay” or pitch (a kind of tar). The task of “paying the devil” (caulking the longest seam) by squatting in the bilges was despised by every seaman.

## from Secondary Conn

by Garry Phillips

The reason I titled this column “Secondary Con” was that I always knew who was in charge of the Association – who runs the Association - who was the heart and soul of the Association, and continues to be. That is you, the Shipmate who continues to pay his dues and continues to support and encourage those of us in leadership roles. Joe Hill, who is arguably the hardest working man I know, tells me that people faithfully pay their dues, which, for some, is quite a bit of money. He told me that he recently got a note from a shipmate who apologized profusely for forgetting to pay his dues at the first of the year, so he sent along his dues for 2004.

You’ve gotta know that without your support, there would be no Association, and without your paying dues, we couldn’t plan reunion events, have a web page, put out a newsletter, or otherwise keep in touch.

I thank you for your diligence and for your continued support. *The Grey Ghost* helped to develop and define some great characters. You are one of them.

## *Reminiscences . . .*

Captain Ed Willis, whom many of you know, and who was a Lieutenant (jg) when I knew him aboard ship, submitted an interesting tale, which many of you will recognize . . .

“The most thrilling experience came one day as we were refueling alongside an oiler. Captain John

Webster had the conn and I was standing alongside him. He turned to me and asked, “How’s your confidence level?” I replied, “Good.” He said take the conn and I did. Now keep in mind that the two large ships are about 150 feet apart proceeding at a good speed and any wrong maneuver will cause a collision. As the distance line shows the ships closing one gets an urge to change course slightly, but sometimes it requires holding one’s breath and not doing anything. All went well and I kept the conn as we completed refueling and broke away to resume station. That was an example of leadership, giving a junior officer some much-needed training. Some captains like to do too much themselves. It built confidence in me, and my confidence in the captain was strengthened.

Captain Webster was a fine man, too. I never observed him lose his temper or use strong language. He used to refer to the XO, CDR Demetrius J. Vellis, as “Jimmy.” Obviously they had a good relationship. I’ve learned over a lifetime that the tone of an organization starts at the top. That’s the key reason why service on the Rochester was so special.

As an example of how smoothly the whole ship functioned I remember one time that we got underway from the Naval Base at Yokosuka, Japan. A British cruiser was moored across the dock from Rochester and many of its crew was topsides watching us depart. I was sea detail officer of the deck that day and there was a long checklist of things to accomplish before reporting to the Executive Officer that the ship was ready to get underway. Reports had to come in from all the departments, Engineering, Weapons, Operations, Navigation, and Supply. Everything went well and exactly at 0800 the ship’s bell sounded eight bells, the last line came aboard, the bugler sounded a note, the whistle sounded one long blast followed by three short blasts and we moved out into the stream. I couldn’t help thinking that we offered a great example to that older navy across the way.”

*San Diego in 2004!*