

USS ROCHESTER (CA-124)

Association

Newsletter

Vol. I, No. 22

February 2004

Think San Diego – Call A Shipmate September 29 – October 3

Arlington, Va. – Only eight more months before the 2004 Ship's reunion in sunny San Diego, California, at the Red Lion *Hanalei Hotel*. Please! Start making your plans now so you won't miss the fun and excitement.

Next month, you will be receiving a package in the mail that will provide everything you will need for registration. Be sure to read it and respond as soon as you can.

This is going to be the biggest and best reunion ever, but we need your help doing it. I want to encourage you to, first, plan to come to the reunion, and second, contact other shipmates and encourage them to attend. As soon as you put down this newsletter, pick up the phone and call three other shipmates to encourage them to come. If you need telephone numbers, call me or one of the other officers. We will help you find them. (By the way, a great tool for finding names and telephone numbers is www.switchboard.com.) See **Gordon Cargill's** report below.

San Diego, CA -- Destination San Diego for the USS ROCHESTER, September 29 to October 3, reunion is well on its way. Tours and events are being arranged for Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday a Hawaiian Luau is planned. Start looking for you undersized Hawaiian shirts! Saturday's banquet dinner is coming along well. This year's REUNION BOOKLET we are planning to include your Navy picture of when you served aboard the ROCHESTER along with the formal picture taken

at the banquet dinner. Start looking for the picture that you look the best in.

With the best climate in the country you will find miles of sandy beaches, many waterfront activities a large concentration of museums, and award winning restaurants. The development of Horton Plaza, the Gaslamp Quarter and Mission Valley are areas of major shopping, restaurants, and some of the best entertainment in San Diego. There is Balboa Park with its museums and world famous San Diego Zoo. Then there is Old Town, the birthplace of San Diego that is now a historical park. Just up the coast is La Jolla, sometimes called the "Rodeo Drive" of San Diego. Just south of the border is Tijuana with its shopping and restaurants. This is not what you might remember a number of years ago. As you can see there is a lot to see and do while you are out here. Tours that are being set up are as follows.

City Tour. This will be a motor coach ride around the city that will give an overall perspective of the city and highlight the main attractions that will allow the individual the option of taking in some of these areas in more detail at a later date. This will include Point Loma, the Historic Gaslamp District, The Embarcadero -- the waterfront district including the newest attraction to San Diego, the aircraft carrier USS MIDWAY. Cross over the bridge to Coronado and on past the Hotel

Del Coronado then back to the mainland to Balboa Park and Old Town State Park.

Dinner Cruise. An evening dinner cruise on San Diego Bay that will have a varied menu and a DJ for music and dancing.

Balboa Park. Provides an opportunity to visit and explore the numerous museums, art galleries, theaters, and public gardens.

San Diego Zoo. A private behind the scenes tour not open to the general public will give an insight to many of the Zoo attractions followed by the opportunity to explore the zoo on your own.

Tijuana. A tax free zone, this is a shopper's paradise for any thing from designer boutiques to local crafts. A stop for lunch at one of TJ's restaurants will hit the spot after your sightseeing and shopping spree. *Current ID is required to cross the border.

Viejas Outlet Center and Casino. This is one of California's premier Indian Casinos that has a full range of table games, video games and slot machines. Across the street is a huge outlet center offering the most popular names and values in outlet shopping.

NOTES

Our good friend **Daryl Cox** sent this e-mail just before Christmas. It was so great, I asked him if we could share it in the NewsLetter. I'll let him tell it:

Clifton KS -- "Shipmates:

I called our Company Commander the other night that we had in boot camp. He is living in San Diego and still at the same house I saw him several years ago when I visited him. His wife died a couple weeks ago. She had been sick for several years and was not well when I visited.

He has a memory like we all would like to have. He remembered me and could name most in that company. He was born in Nebraska and lived there

until he joined the Navy. He was at Maui, Hawaii when Pearl Harbor happened aboard a destroyer. He said they steamed in to Pearl Harbor the day after the invasion. He told me how it was then.

He had retired from the Navy as a Chief Warrant after 20 and was called back in to help recruits through boot camp. He spent 4 more years in the service then and retired. He then went to barber school and became a barber in San Diego until he retired.

I remember him telling us that we should be able to handle that training because we were young and he was 42 at that time. Yes, that makes him 94 now. He is up on current events and was a joy to talk to. He told me I was the only man that ever looked him up. We thought he was a mean old man at first but soon learned what a nice fellow he was. We did finish as the honor company graduating at that time.

I told him that our reunion was to be in San Diego and he wanted me to be sure to contact him. He told me that his Granddaughter and her Husband moved into his house with him and he enjoys the company. He has a Son who lives in San Diego. His Daughter from Nebraska is coming over Christmas season.

I wanted to let you all know that "OLD" Navy personnel can live a long time. And [about] the feeling that's available by keeping in contact.

I hope everyone enjoys old friendships as much as I do, and I want to wish you all--

"MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR" DB" {The Company Commander is: **Fred Rurup**, 672 Jackson Dr., San Diego, Ca. 92119-3334}

Ocean Hills, CA -- Received an inquiry through a nice note from **Leon Smith**. Leon asked about ship's bells that had been offered earlier though the Ship's Store. For anyone who is interested in obtaining a ship's bell, recommend you look at the Navy Memorial's website at: www.lonesailor.org. The "Gear Locker" is a great place to buy Navy stores.

Clifton KS -- **DB** also told us about the passing of another shipmate **Harold Boak**. Harold's wife, **Twila**, said his fight with cancer finally ended. DB indicated that, "She said Harold was a good man, as we all knew." ... We send his family our fondest regards.

St. Petersburg, FL -- **Jane Vear**, wife of our shipmate **George Vear** who passed away in 2001, sent us a picture of the ROCHESTER, which he had had framed. Jane is moving into a smaller accommodation and has offered the picture for someone to keep. If you are interested in taking this nicely framed picture (15 X 24" color poster), please let me (Garry) know. Thanks, Jane!

{**Ron Stalsberg**. Did we get it right this time?}

Frankenmuth, MI – **Moose Schneider** reported that the Fox Division 2005 reunion is planned to be a five-day "winter escape" cruise departing from Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The cruise is scheduled for February 10 through 14 in 2005 (a year from now). There's plenty of time to plan, and it sounds like great fun. For further information, shipmates may contact Moose at 989-652-2086 or **Dawn Taylor Snyder** (Travel Agent) at 800-322-1120. Moose said, "All Rochester shipmates as well as former Fox Division personnel are welcome to join us."

NEW MEMBERS:

We wish to welcome aboard (again) the new USS ROCHESTER Association Members:

Frank E. Connolly, Jr
John Joseph Foley
John Robert Jurisich

Membership & Mailing Information

Cookeville, TN--- One of the hardest things for us to do is to drop former members from the membership role and quit sending them Newsletters, but that is exactly what we have to do if membership is not up to date. The Association runs on its active membership. We can't thank you enough for renewing your memberships and doing it on time. Membership dues cover the period

1 January through 31 December. Sometimes, it's tough. Occasionally, we misplace our membership cards, sometimes, we simply forget. As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we have put a procedure in place that will help you keep current. The year that the dues are paid up to will be indicated on the address label just like the magazine subscriptions do. For example: Thomas Finnegan 03. (If HM, SP, or LM is after your name, the year will not appear. HM stands for Honorary Member, SP is Special Member and LM is Life Member.) If you wish verification or further information, Joe Hill will be glad to explain in detail. He can be reached at 4011 Ditty Road, Cookeville, TN 38506-7663. Phone (931) 432-4848; FAX (931) 432-2534. E-Mail is: joehillsr@multipro.com. Joe will also provide members' addresses and phone numbers upon request.

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

Ship's Store

We are still looking for a Storekeeper for the Ship's Store. I know that there are dozens of you that could do a great job of this. Come on ... you can do it! Call me at 703-671-3125.

Association Officers

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

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 4th Street South, Arlington, VA 22204

Chaplain's Corner

FRETTING IS A WASTE

The older we get the shorter life seems. Author Victor Hugo stated, "Short as life is, we make it still shorter by the careless waste of time."

There's no sadder example of wasted time than a life dominated by fretting. I have just returned from a trip to Hawaii and could have fretted about things such as noise, crowds of people, or transportation delays but chose to enjoy the beaches, delicious food, 80-degree weather and enjoyable sights. I'm reminded of a lady on a train ride through an English countryside who stated at her journey's end, "If I'd known I was going to arrive so soon, I wouldn't have wasted my time by fretting so much about temperature, seat assignment and minor things."

Psalm 90 states the, "Days of our life are threescore and ten" and we are to, "Number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom." Recently my 70th birthday arrived. The Psalmist suggest that we be glad and let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.

May I suggest that rather than fretting about the issues of life we count our blessings and rejoice in the goodness of our Lord.

Frank West
Chaplain



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

Name	ST	Yr	Div	OnBd
William A. Gross	TX	2002	Fox	55-59
Mark J. Hickey	NH	2004	Fox	49-53
Carl E. Werner	MD	2003	CS	50-51

from Secondary Conn

by Garry Phillips

I want to call your attention to the fact that we will be electing officers for the Association at the business meeting in San Diego. We always need new blood and a commitment to serve. If any of you want to help out, please let me know. I'll be your campaign manager!

New subject: Congratulations to you ROCHESTER Shellbacks who crossed the Equator on February 6, 1954 – 50 Years Ago!

Garry

Word of the Day

CHEWING the FAT:

"God made the vittles, but the devil made the cook" was a popular saying used by seafaring men in the 19th century when salted beef was staple diet aboard ship.

This tough cured beef suitable only for long voyages when nothing else was cheap or would keep as well (remember, there was no refrigeration) required prolonged chewing to make it edible. Men often chewed one chunk for hours, just as it were chewing gum and referred to this practice as "chewing the fat."

Our shipmate **Frank Spittle** from Laguna Hills, CA, sent another chapter of his book. *Sailor, Write Your Mother*. It is very humorous, and it strikes a warm chord in every sailor's heart:

"Cinderella Liberty"

Weeks of recruit training passed and the Navy figured we needed a little treat before everyone suffered nervous breakdowns. The company commanders announced our first liberty, but no one would go into town before viewing the traditional "VD Movies." The serious films contained some humor, but I suppose most of the laughter in the darkened room resulted from our discomfort watching this slice of life for the first time. The nervous laughing tailed off when the actor removed a tube from a small package with a printed label "Doughboy." Nostalgia from WWI? Those Doughboy Kits accompanied the issued

condoms. I wondered if *they* were left over from 1917?

Excitement built while we ironed new dress blues, heavy wood with a smell that was, well, special – good and Navy. Chief Gunner’s Mate Young taught us to dampen our large silk neckerchiefs and, with a partner, hold the four corners to snap up and down until the wrinkles smoothed out. Hours of spit-shining brought each man’s new liberty shoes, leather soles clean and unscuffed, to a mirror finish. Everyone had his own technique to guarantee an inspection-perfect shine. Fail inspection – no liberty.

Downtown San Diego in 1946 was still geared for wartime business. We headed to the USO on Broadway for homemade cookies and lots of cold milk served by volunteer motherly types. The free juke box played Glenn Miller’s *Pennsylvania SixOfive Thousand* along with Benny Goodman’s *And the Angles Sing*. and of course lots of Country for the folks who grew up in The South. We played ping-pong and goofed around like the seventeen year olds we were. And of course, this wholesome activity didn’t require any of that goofy Doughboy Pro Kit business.

Thirty government dollars, our first payday, rested secure against my chest in the buttoned inner pocket of my jumper – the most discretionary money I had ever held. Down lower Broadway, across the YMCA, awaited the arcades. Pitch-men, and women, vied to separate the green recruits from their money. Bets on unfamiliar skills, like covering the interior of a circle with three hand-dropped disks, seemed doable.

“Just take a look. See how easy it is?” The shark casually dropped the individual disks and covered the circle with ease.

Wagers could be substantial if you threw darts at balloons, tossed coins into saucers, or shot .22 rifles down an encased tube to a target, returned by a pulley so you could see why you were unsuccessful in removing the bull’s eye.

“Here Hawkeye, take it back to the ship with ya. A target souvenir of your close win.”

We each bought some flashy memento. What new navy recruit didn’t get his mother back in

Topeka a beautiful fringed pillow with gold fabric and the words “Mother” or San Diego California” printed in bilious lavender script across its front?

Liberty expired on the base at midnight. We gathered in the barracks to compare experiences. Scotch taped while-napkin bandages came off to share new tattoos. We admired the macho inked designs, along with individual prizes typical of purchases by a “fool and his money,” as Mom says. ...

The Gift of Friendship

Of all the treasured gifts on Earth
I sincerely do believe
That friendship in its truest form
Is the greatest gift one can receive

Gold and silver and all they can buy
Are cold material things
Friendship is warm and spiritual
And oh the comfort and joy it brings

When the sun shines bright and times are good
Friends seem to be at their best
But when tragedy and hard times come
True friendship is put to test

From the depths of a heart that is most sincere
This warm offer to you I extend
My friendship is yours for just the taking
Please accept it and be my friend

My friendship I give free and gladly
It is a gift straight from my heart
And I promise to be true and faithful
Whether we are near or far apart

I highly treasure my friendships
It is the only real wealth that I own
I feel secure in having friends like you
And I will never feel alone

Jess Johnson, 1-12-04

