

# YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 7, Issue 1

January 2003

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS YANCEY AKA-93



### Special Points of Interest

- *The attractions of Corpus Christi, TX are outlined for you in the cover story. It's a great place to visit, so make plans to attend the reunion there.*
- *Read some stories of the "Yancey Days" in MAIL CALL on page three. We want your stories too. Please send them to ML&RS or to Ken Groom for publication.*
- *Do you remember the USS Yancey's trip to Antarctica? Read about that time on page four under "USS Yancey History."*
- *Fill out and return the reunion survey on page five.*

## CORPUS CHRISTI, TX IN 2003

Your choice of Corpus Christi, TX as the site for the 2003 reunion of the USS Yancey will be a great experience for you. As usual, we will give you a brief description of some of the attractions in the city and let you decide which ones will be on your agenda. Use the survey on page five to let us know your choices, and then we will get to work planning the activities. The dates have not been finalized as of yet, so you will be informed in the next newsletter on exact dates; however, the last week in October is the favored time.

Corpus Christi, TX is a

major deep-water port and one of Texas' most popular seacoast playground cities. The city began as a frontier trading post in 1839. Its population today is approximately 275,000. The city features a seawall, with steps to the water, that was built in the late 1930s as part of a major landfill that created Shoreline Boulevard and the popular "T" head docks for pleasure boats. Corpus Christi's Water Garden at Bayfront Arts and Science Park sparkles for visitors who see, hear, and touch the garden's water. Some 150 fountains form the nucleus of the park, which is lighted at night.

### ATTRACTIONS

**TEXAS STATE AQUARIUM:** Enter through a cascade of water above a glass-enclosed tunnel. See close-up views of the wonders of the Gulf of Mexico, the "Wonderful World of Sherman's Lagoon," a variety of water turtles, river otters and the only albino alligator in captivity.

**CORPUS CHRISTI BOTANICAL GARDENS:** This is a 180-acre site along the Oso Creek and features Orchid House, Exhibit House, exotic Plumeria collection, a sensory garden, shaded butterfly and bird trail, a wetlands trail, and

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

Palapa Grande on Gator Lake.

**CORPUS CHRISTI GREYHOUND RACE TRACK:** There is year-round racing here on a 60-acre facility, as well as simulcast races from other tracks. Visitors can see greyhounds in their handling pens in 18 on-premises kennels.

**PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE:** 110 mile-long Padre Island offers one of the last natural seashores in the nation. Each end of the narrow sand island is developed with parks and resorts, but in between lies the 80-mile stretch of unblemished seashore. Beachcombers may collect seashells, driftwood, and many other interesting items washed ashore by the tides.

**U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION:** Located on the peninsula at the southeastern edge of the city, this is the home of the U.S. Navy's Air Training Command.

**USS LEXINGTON MUSEUM:** The USS Lexington was commissioned in 1943 and served longer and set more records than any carrier in the U.S. Navy. During WWII she saw action from Tarawa to Tokyo and was the first U.S. carrier to enter Tokyo Bay after the treaty was signed with Japan in 1945. This floating naval museum features tours of the hangar deck, foc'sle, commanding officer/admiral quarters, sick bay, galley, flight deck, bridge, and much more.

**KING RANCH:** Founded in 1853 by Capt. Richard King, this 825,000 acre ranch is larger than the state of Rhode Island. A tour of the ranch will include a guide from the ranch and lunch served in the Cowboy Camphouse.

**CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY:** A treasure house of collections that preserve the natural and cultural history of the area. On display are artifacts, pictures, documents, weapons and memorabilia the colorful past of South Texas.

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## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance remaining after 11/02 issue **\$223.63**

Funds received since 11/02 issue **\$210.00**

Funds available for 01/03 issue **\$433.63**

Funds expended for 01/03 issue **\$262.19**

Remaining balance **\$171.44**

**Funds will be needed for April.**

### A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR FORMER USS YANCEY SAILORS

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*"Our Reunions Work So You don't Have To"*

## COOL FACTS ABOUT CORPUS CHRISTI

- Corpus Christi's Texas neighbor, Padre Island, is the longest barrier island in the nation.
- Average Corpus Christi temperature is 71.2 degrees
- There are approximately 255 days of Corpus Christi vacation sunshine a year.
- The Harbor Bridge, the second tallest bridge in Texas, spans the port and connects Corpus Christi Beach to the downtown area.
- Corpus Christi is the fifth largest deep-water port in the U.S.
- King Ranch is the founder of the Santa Gertrudis breed of cattle.

## STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The YANCEY MEMORIES is the official publication of the USS YANCEY AKA-93 Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in January, April, July, and October, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the YANCEY. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space and grammar limitations.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your stories and suggestions.

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**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR  
FROM THE STAFF  
AT ML&RS**



## WELCOME MAT

The following shipmate has been located since the last newsletter. Welcome Aboard! We hope to see you at the next reunion. You are invited to become an active member of the association.

*Larry Mohs (1964-65) QM  
205 A Edgewood Ave  
Methuen, MA 01844-2462  
978-688-0350*

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## TAPS

The Yancey Memories was notified of the following shipmates' deaths. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the families of the deceased. Anyone who knows of a deceased shipmate, or learns of one, please notify ML & RS, Inc so their names can be included in TAPS and be added to the Honor Roll.

*Joseph Mislevy  
Died July 22, 2001*

*James Foster (1944-45) BM2/c  
Date of death not known*

*Raymond King  
(1944-46) Cox Sw LC Div*

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### What is the nation's longest highway in any one state?

U.S. 83 (903 miles from Brownsville to the Panhandle). IH-10 is only 878.7 miles long from Louisiana just east of Orange to El Paso.)



## MAIL CALL

*The following stories were sent in by Ken Groom, USS Yancey historian, from various sources. The contributor's name will be printed at the end of each story.*

### FISHING YANCEY-STYLE

"On the way to Mandelay, where the flying fishes play." (R. Kipling)

That was the way it was that Saturday afternoon in 1952 when we were on our way to Japan on a sunny day. We had just had a Saturday morning inspection in whites. This time the sea was glossy smooth. According to my sources, a thump and a vibration was felt and after that the ship slowed to a stop when it was announced that we had hit a big fish. Several of us scrambled up to the bow with our cameras to take a photo of the fish—estimated at about 15 feet in length, resembling a flounder in shape and very colorful. Later, someone identified it as an "Ocean Sun Fish." Two grappling hooks were put over the bow to bring the fish aboard. As it was remembered, the fish was so large that one of the hooks straightened out in an attempt to bring it aboard. The other hook simply pulled out. The fish drifted off to the starboard side without much movement. We then got underway. Contributed by Ed Booth and Harold Hegler

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### ADDITION TO PREVIOUS STORY "YANCEY HITS CHI CHI MOUNTAIN"

One of the reasons for the slow response in getting the ship stopped and turned was that the Captain had been a "tin can" sailor and was used to two propellers for quick maneuvering—The Yancey had only one large one and could only go about half of the speed of a destroyer.

Contributed by Cliff McCune

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### HOPPY'S FAVORITE

In San Diego, while I was in Boot Camp, I remember that we were served milk with the brand slogan "Hoppy's Favorite" on the label. The label had "Hoppy" tipping up a quart of milk to his lips with obvious satisfaction. As most of you probably remember, "Hop along Cassidy" (Hoppy) was a western movie star popular in the 40s. I don't remember him hopping, but that is what he was called. He always had the best of virtues in those Saturday afternoon matinees. To a 12-year old, none could be better.

The first time I went to Japan on the Yancey, I remember leaving the gate at Yokosuka, Japan and seeing this big billboard with my favorite western star (Hoppy). But this time he had a bottle of Kirin beer up to his lips. Nothing else was changed—he had that same look of satisfaction. The Japanese had latched on to a good thing. At first I was so disillusioned that I was at odds as what to do. It was then that I saw the large green building across the street known as the Enlisted Men's Club and decided if Kirin was good enough for "Hoppy" it was good enough for me.

Contributed by Ken Groom

*Editor's note: Does anyone remember the name of Hopalong's horse? Answer on page four.*

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### DID YOU KNOW?

- Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.
- The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$6,400.
- Coca Cola was originally green.

# USS YANCEY HISTORY

*Continued from last issue*

In compliance with her new orders, *Yancey* proceeded back to the west coast, sailing via Cristobal and the Panama Canal. Ultimately arriving at San Pedro, Calif., *Yancey* reported for duty to Commander, TF 68.

*Yancey* was reassigned to Service Force, Pacific Fleet, and home ported at San Francisco, Calif., on 11 November 1946. The next day, she shifted to Port Hueneme, Calif., where she began loading cargo for Operation "Highjump."

Departing Port Hueneme on 2 December, *Yancey* pressed southward, headed for Antarctica, and spent Christmas at sea. Two days later, she saw her first icebergs-visible evidence that she was entering the polar latitudes. She sighted the northern limit of the Antarctic pack ice on the 28th and spent the next two days investigating ice conditions. She fueled from Canisteo (AO-99) 10 miles south of Scott Island, Antarctica, purportedly becoming the first ship to conduct an underway refueling below the Antarctic Circle.

After threading her way through the pack ice over the ensuing weeks, *Yancey* finally arrived at Bay of Whales, Antarctica, mooring at the shelf ice on 18 January 1947. Subsequently departing that "port" on 6 February for the area to the north of the ice floes, the attack cargo ship entered the pack ice on the 9th. Over the next three days, she pressed through the floes that extended for a width of almost 275 miles.

On 13 February, *Yancey* joined TU 68.12 which also included that Coast Guard icebreaker, *USCG Northwind*, towing the attack cargo ship *Merrick* (AKA-97). Within a week, the ships were riding out a fierce storm that justified—at least to *Yancey* sailors—the Antarctic's title as "The World's Stormiest Sea."

*Yancey* reached for Port Chalmers, New Zealand, on 22

February and departed that port on 5 March, bound for Samoa. Subsequently departing Pago Pago on 27 March bound for Hawaii with *YTL-153* in tow, the attack cargo ship arrived at Pearl Harbor on 14 April. She soon got underway for the west coast of the United States and reached Port Hueneme on 2 May 1947. There, *Yancey* disembarked a unit of a construction battalion ("Seabees") and discharged TF 68 cargo. Her duty with TF 68 thus completed on 15 May, *Yancey* reported for duty to Commander, Service Division (ServDiv) 12.

Shortly thereafter, *Yancey* shifted to San Pedro before heading to Terminal Island, Calif., for restricted availability on 20 May. After that period of repairs and alterations, *Yancey* returned to Port Hueneme to load cargo earmarked for shipment to Pearl Harbor and Guam.

Over the next decade, *Yancey* operated between west coast ports and advanced bases in the Western Pacific (WesPac), including ports in Japan, Korea, and the Philippines. During that period, she also supported United Nations (UN) actions in Korea, operating in support of the initial attempts to fight the North Korean aggressors; in the first UN counter-offensives in early 1951; and in the final phases of activity that preceded the armistice in the summer of 1953. Finally, after having served continuously since 1944, *Yancey* was deactivated at San Francisco in December 1957 and placed out of commission in March 1958.

Her sojourn in reserve, however, proved short. On 17 November 1961, as part of President John F. Kennedy's bid to build up the United States Navy, *Yancey* was recommissioned at Portland, Oreg., Capt. Gordon R. Keating in command.

Soon to join the Atlantic Fleet, *Yancey* departed San Diego on 12 January 1962 and reached Norfolk, her new assigned home port, on 2 February, there becoming the newest member of Amphibious Squadron (PhibRon) 12. Over the ensuing

months, *Yancey* took part in a varied slate of exercises and maneuvers.

*Yancey* participated in Operation "Philblex" in the spring of 1962, operating off Roosevelt Roads and Vieques, Puerto Rico. She later paid a port call at Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands before she returned to Roosevelt Roads and reloaded equipment and embarked marines slated to return to Morehead, NC. Subsequently returning to Norfolk on 2 May, *Yancey* touched briefly at Charleston, SC, to take on additional landing craft before returning to the Tidewater region to spend the remainder of May.

Subsequently visiting Boston, Mass., and Rockland, Maine, *Yancey* participated in amphibious boat exercises at Provincetown, Mass., before she got underway on 24 July for Davisville, RI. There, she loaded a Seabee unit and their equipment and headed eastward, bound for Rota, Spain. Offloading one Seabee unit and unloading another, *Yancey* then paused briefly at Gibraltar before touching at Lisbon on the return leg of her voyage to the United States. Disembarking the Seabees and unloading their equipment at Davisville, *Yancey* headed back to Norfolk reaching her home port on 18 August 1962.

On 17 October, *Yancey* again sailed from Norfolk and proceeded to Morehead City, NC, to load marines and equipment for Operation "PhiBrigLex" (Amphibious Brigade Exercises) slated for Vieques, Puerto Rico. Upon arrival, the attack cargo ship loaded immediately and set out to join the rest of the ships in the squadron. She soon was fighting her way through Hurricane "Ella" which caused her to alter her course to avoid the most severe part of the storm.

*To be continued in next issue.*

Answer to question on page 3: Hopalong Cassidy's horse was named Topper.

# USS YANCEY 2003 SURVEY

## CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

*Please take a few minutes to complete the survey of the attractions in the Corpus Christ area and return it to Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc. We will use the surveys to custom design your reunion to what you want to do. Registration packets will be mailed approximately ninety days prior to the reunion.*

*Please check the attractions you would like to visit during the reunion.*

**Texas State Aquarium** \_\_\_\_\_

**Corpus Christi Botanical Gardens** \_\_\_\_\_

**Corpus Christi Greyhound Race Track** \_\_\_\_\_

**Padre Island National Seashore** \_\_\_\_\_

**U.S. Naval Air Station** \_\_\_\_\_

**USS Lexington Museum** \_\_\_\_\_

**King Ranch** \_\_\_\_\_

**Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History** \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like a Welcome Reception the first evening of the reunion?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, would you prefer only an hors d'oeuvre platter \_\_\_\_\_  
or a hamburger/hot dog or soup & sandwich type dinner? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you prefer dinner together as a group at the hotel on Friday evening \_\_\_\_\_  
or have the evening free to dine on your own? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you prefer breakfast all three mornings \_\_\_\_\_ or only on Sunday? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want entertainment after the banquet? (Keeping in mind this will increase the banquet cost to pay for the music) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments and suggestions:

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Return to:

Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc.  
PO Drawer 11399  
Hickory, NC 28603

or:  
Fax: 828-256-6559