

YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 11, Issue 4

January 2008

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS YANCEY AKA-93



Special Points of Interest

- *Your suggestions about the reunion are taken seriously by ML&RS, Inc, so your concerns are printed as the cover story and a response is on page two.*
- *Would you like to see a USS Yancey plaque at the Navy Memorial in Washington, DC? Paul Dunn has all the information on page three.*
- *Your responses to the question about how the Navy benefited your life begin on page four. Thanks to everyone who sent back a response!*
- *Ken Groom still remembers chipping paint on the USS Yancey. See his story on page six.*
- *If you don't have e-mail and didn't get a chance to respond to how the Navy benefited your life, send your answer by mail to ML&RS, Inc at our address on page 3.*

TAKING A LOOK AT THE 2007 REUNION

2007 Reunion / Washington DC

Overall the reunion was successful as always, however there were complaints and suggestions that I want to pass along to ML&RS.

HOTEL: The hotel was very nice with the exception of the bartender service. I spoke to Lynn about it and she said the bar is not usually open on Saturday and Sunday which explains the problem. The rooms were nice, the transportation to/from the airport was great and the food was good.

TOURS: The negative feedback I received about the tours was not seeing everything on the agenda. We spent almost 4 hours at the US

Navy Memorial because of memorial services for the Yancey and the Simon Lake. The Navy Memorial is nice but several hours is enough time. The result was having only an hour to spend at the Navy Museum which we were all looking forward to and no time to go aboard the destroyer near the museum.

We also fell behind schedule on the Saturday tour, mostly waiting for the tram in Arlington Cemetery. We did manage to get to the World War II Memorial but had to skip the Korean Memorial and Vietnam Memorial.

I realize ML&RS does not have total control over these issues but some people suggested a more realistic itinerary for the tours. We ran into the same problem in Chicago last year and all of the

wives were disappointed with only a bathroom break at Navy Pier.

SHARING REUNION: This was the biggest issue brought up to me at our business meeting and in casual conversations. The Simon Lake group was great and there were no issues other than sharing our dinners and hospitality room. For example there were 5 tables in the room and the Simon Lake had the middle 2 leaving the last table sort of isolated from the others in our group. Most felt the reunion didn't get rolling until our Saturday night banquet. (I did speak with both Lynn and Dina and understand the hotel was the cause of this).

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

HOSPITALITY ROOM: Many felt we did not have a hospitality room this year because it was the banquet room and was shared with the Simon Lake. (Also it did not open until 4PM on Thursday). Until the last 2 years we have had a smaller room where albums, mementos, photos etc. could be left out because the room could be locked. This is not the case with a larger room. This year I saw only one cruise book and the book Lynn brought. Everyone in attendance stated they would rather pay more for a separate reunion and hospitality room. Normally shared tours would not be an issue, however Simon Lake and Yancey having events at different times at the Navy Memorial resulted in increased idle time for both groups. There is no easy answer for this other than separate tours at a higher cost. (Although I'm not sure how often a situation like the Navy Memorial would occur so this could be a moot point).

CONCLUSION: The consensus is that you guys are doing a great job and we intend to use your services as long as you will have us as a customer. I personally have no complaints about ML&RS or any of the employees. Whenever I call or email, you are always willing to make changes or provide the answer I need. If you would like to discuss any of this in further detail or have any question please feel free to contact me.

Thanks,
George Clifton
USS Yancey AKA-93
708-425-8531 Home
312-985-2357 Office (Monday – Friday 8:00 to 4:00 Central Time)

I hope that everyone's holiday season was happy and safe. Have a Happy New Year and start planning for this year's reunion in Seattle.

George Rohrman

RESPONSE TO REUNION CONCERNS

George,

First I want to thank you for the comments that you provided. This is exactly the kind of feedback that we need to improve our service to you. We appreciate everyone's input – it gives us the opportunity to correct and/or make changes, or explain why we can't. I would like to include the comments in the next newsletter, along with our response. I think this would serve a purpose by letting Yancey members know that we are listening to them. With your permission, we will publish this next issue.

We agree that the DC reunion was not ideal, but some of the concerns brought up were the best of the choices available to us. Let me try to explain why certain decisions were made, and what we can do to avoid similar situations. Now, let me address point by point the concerns that you shared.

Hotel: The bartender issue is totally our fault. In all of our years of reunion management, we never encountered a situation where the hotel bar was not open on weekends. Very simply, we assumed (there is that word again) it would be and did not ask. I doubt if that ever happens again.

Tours: The tour company in DC is not flexible. We either have 35 persons per bus, or pay for 35 persons per bus. You guys didn't have 35 persons either day – neither did the Simon Lake. The choices were either to combine the groups or raise the prices to cover the difference. The tour cost is already outrageous. Since the Navy Memorial is an extremely important stop, we opted to combine the groups, getting the two appointments as close together as possible. Otherwise without greatly increasing the price, neither of you could have gone on either day's tour separately. Regarding Arlington and the Tram, again, numbers talk. If we had had a minimum of 50 persons, we could have gotten a private tram,

resolving that issue – but even by combining the groups we didn't have 50 people. Finally, the motor coach is contracted for a certain number of hours – when we do fall behind, something does have to give. We are truly sorry that not every stop was made, but honestly, I don't have a magic answer, except to say next time we'll try to stay on schedule and not miss any of the advertised attractions.

Sharing the Reunion & Hospitality Space:

This is something that is probably going to happen again – maybe not next year or even the next, but it could. All things considered it is the way to go, although when and if it happens we will try to have separate hospitality and meal functions in the future. When two groups are going to the same city at the same time, it saves everyone money to share facilities. It may not be the most desirable situation, but trust me on this one, in DC it was far better than paying for a separate room. Complimentary space such as a hospitality room is governed by the number of occupied hotel rooms. Hotels, especially in DC do not offer any appreciable discounts or "perks" for groups who occupy less than 25 hotel rooms – you guys had 21, the Simon Lake had 12. Together you exceeded the minimum; that fact and because we've done a lot of business at that hotel, Brenda was able to get extremely good rates and one complimentary hospitality room, even though it was a banquet room. The hotel "suggested", and we went along with it, that the hospitality room be combined. We agreed, because there would have been a substantial room rental fee if we had not accepted the "suggestion." We envisioned some sort of separation within the room, but that apparently did not happen. Our rep should have made sure there were tables designated for each group. That we

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

can insure does not happen again.

Most breakfasts were on your own, the banquets were on different nights as were the closing day's breakfasts. So really, Friday night was the only meal that you shared. Here we are with numbers again. Practically all hotels require a minimum of 50 people for a dinner buffet. Neither group came anywhere near that number – together we just barely made it. Having dinner together was a conscious choice so we could have the dinner that was advertised, rather than being served a less attractive plated meal separately.

In Summary: From a hotel's viewpoint, the most important thing is rooms occupied. Everything is predicated on those numbers. The more rooms we occupy, the more "goodies" we can expect. The reverse is also true. We hope that this brief summary helps to understand a little of the reunion "inner-workings" and why some things happened as they did.

Finally, we thank you for your support and confidence and assure you that in the future, we'll make every effort to insure that your concerns are addressed and when we can make positive changes, we will. On the other hand, there may be times, especially if attendance is lower than expected, when we need to choose between two "less than ideal" options. In either case, you can be assured the choice that is best for the most attendees will be made.

Larry Eckard, President ML&RS, Inc

A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR
FORMER USS YANCEY SAILORS

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

USS YANCEY PLAQUE FOR NAVY MEMORIAL

During our last reunion in Washington, DC, one of our stops was at the Navy Memorial. This is an impressive memorial with various exhibits inside, and a large plaza outside. We had a wreath laying ceremony outside with a color guard, music, and a speech by the President of the Memorial.

The other ship's reunion group had another type of ceremony where they unveiled a plaque of their ship on a wall inside the building. The memorial president suggested to us that we consider donating a plaque also.

The total cost is \$3,000.00. For this we would get a plaque installed on the memorial's wall with an outline of the Yancey and some words about our reunion group. Whenever we would return to the DC area, the Memorial would have an unveiling ceremony for us.

There is only one way that this will work for our group. We need to collect contributions to see if we can reach \$3,000. They have an initial deposit amount of \$500.00 to get started on the plaque. Since we do

not have an organization that collects dues and has a treasury, we must use this contribution method.

As a way to gauge true interest in this project, I request that you send to me your contribution. Please make the check out to "US Navy Memorial". Send it to the following address:

Paul H. Dunn
7074 Brightwood Drive
Concord Twp., OH 44077-2167

My email address is paul@dunn.org if you have any questions/suggestions. My intention is to see how much we receive over the next two months. If we get the \$3,000, I will forward the checks to them to order the plaque. If we do not get that amount, I will return the checks to you. Therefore please make sure your name and address is either on the check itself, or inside the envelope.

Thank you.

Paul H. Dunn



Photo submitted by Ken Groom

HOW DID BEING IN THE NAVY BENEFIT YOUR LIFE?

Editor's Note: The question above was posed in an e-mail to all ship-mates. The following responses were received. I wish to thank all those who replied and hope that those of you who do not have e-mail will answer for the next issue. Mail your responses to ML&RS, Inc to the address on page 3.

Gene Hill:

The Navy years for me (and I would say a majority of everyone else) came at a time of transition from living under my parents to the years raising my own children. It was difficult and yet both scary and exciting to see myself facing an authoritative system run by those barely out of the kid stage themselves. I benefited much in later years by learning that I am not the center of the world and accepting what life dishes out. I think the Navy taught me a lot about who I am inside and my ability to make the most of life even in difficult circumstances.

Ken Groom:

During the Korean War, when you turned 19 they said you had two months before being drafted. I signed up for the Air Force and Navy. The Navy took me first. I did get a draft notice about a month after I was in boot camp. I never excelled in sports in high school, so the Navy was a new and rewarding experience. In those days they had more men and not enough ships, so when we went on board the Yancey we probably had 100 more people than needed. There were some regulars, a lot of reservists and us boots. I was assigned to the deck force for the first 6 months where I did a lot of minor chores like everybody else. One of my friends introduced me to the Yeoman's office so I became a Yeoman and enjoyed the situation where I got to know everybody on the ship, including officers and enlisted men. In the

Ship's office there were about 5 of us in this small office. All of them of my age had about 2 years of college—I think that helped inspire me to do something about myself. When my four years were completed, I started Engineering College with a 6 year gap since high school. I was running scared, but the Yancey had matured me to work as a team in all of my classes. We studied in small groups and helped each other. All of this started with my time on the Yancey and of course a mother that graduated from college when she was 50.

Mrs. Edgar H Stephens:

My husband, Edgar Stephens, was in the Navy from 1951 to 1955. After Boot Camp, most of his time was spent on the Yancey. He passed away just over 4 years ago. He always used to say that the best years of his life were spent in the Navy (made me wonder how our marriage ranked with him!). But then he'd say, "You know I mean the SECOND best years."

I know he enjoyed all the travel (numerous times back and forth across the Pacific Ocean during the Korean War), but the biggest thing was all the great friends he made. He was in contact with so many of them over the 46 years of our marriage. I was fortunate to meet many of them too—John Karides, Bob Wallace, Jerry Keeney and their wives, to name a just a few. We did attend one Yancey reunion in Norfolk and had a wonderful time. Since he passed away in Sept of 2003, I still hear from many of them at Christmas time. They all say they have fond memories of their "wild" years in the service and also fond memories of my Ed.

Dale Hall, 1956-57:

First of all, the Navy allowed me to mature away from my folks and small town. I also got to travel, meet new people and make a life-long

friend. Finally, as I was stationed at Pearl my final two years and played basketball for ComServPac, I found my life time career: teaching and coaching. Thank you.

Sheldon Gotesky, 1966-69 SN 3rd Div:

For the most part, I grew up. I learned there is more to life than just hanging around with the guys and girls. Having friends you could depend on either on board or on liberty. Also, from this experience I have gained a true friend for over 40+ years. It's great to just sit back together and reminisce some of our experiences we had while on board the Yancey. It may not have been a Destroyer, Submarine or Aircraft Carrier, but we did the job we were asked to do and we did it with loads of pride. It was an opportunity to see the world while truly serving our Country. God Bless America.

Lt. John K Mielke:

Once the ship was directed to go someplace none of us wanted to go. I forget the details. The Executive officer assembled the entire crew and said, "**GENTLEMEN, GROWL YOU MAY, BUT GO YOU MUST.**" There have been many times in my life I have remembered that phrase as I faced things I did not want to do.

Paul H. Dunn:

I spent three years onboard the Yancey (1966-69). After leaving active service, I stayed in the reserves for another 24 years and retired as a captain.

The biggest benefit to me was the aspect of being part of a team that had ultimate responsibility for each other's safety and well-being. Our ship played a part in winning the Cold War, and I made lasting

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

friendships that are renewed at our reunions.

I was able to visit many different ports in the Caribbean and Med seas, and take tours ashore. It was a cultural eye opener to compare what we take for granted in the USA versus what many places must live with. I appreciated what we have much more so.

There was also a sense of accomplishment, e.g. getting through the Gibraltar Straits without running over the small, wooden fishing boats; safely transiting in heavy fog off the coast of North Carolina with many ships around us. Then there was the outright majesty of a mid watch in calm seas in the Caribbean with the stars above and glowing water below. Of course, those that know me will remember that I did not like to get wet, so the driving rain stuff was unpleasant; along with climbing down the netting to a bobbing Mike boat at 400 am for an amphib landing.

In any case, I felt it was a privilege to serve in the Navy and be able to be called a shipmate.

Ed McLaughlin:

Being in the Navy gave me exposure to people of different ethnic backgrounds and cultures. It made me appreciate the differences and see the similarities in us all. The Navy also added to my love of travel and whetted my appetite for more, which continues today.

I was an Amateur Radio operator before I joined, and subsequently became a Radioman in the Navy. The experience of handling Navy messages, both routine and emergency, instilled in me a need to "Do it right." I have fallen back on the skills I learned, and put them to use as a communications volunteer through the Amateur Radio Emergency Service. I am still a "Ham Operator" and an emergency responder with the Red Cross, providing radio communications during times of natural disaster both local and nationally.

The Navy showed me that a job well done is in itself rewarding, and this same premise is found in our daily lives. If we expect more from ourselves, we will act accordingly. This was a value that my family taught me and the Navy reinforced it.

Jerry Goforth, YN3:

Joining the Navy was the best thing for me. I started to college in 1950 and had no idea what type of work I should train for. After four years in the Navy, with the most time on the Yancey (transferred to the Chara in 1953), I was ready to select a vocation. I took six semesters of Manufacturing Jeweler and two more in Watch Repair. I began working as a jeweler in the fall of 1957 and am still at it. We are getting ready to move our store to a new location at 23 North Main Street in Miami, Oklahoma. If any of you are coming our way, stop by for a visit.

George Rohrman, Metalsmith 2nd, 1951-54:

I got out of high school and went to Pennsylvania that summer to work with my Uncle Charles Rohrman who was a super fine carpenter and was working for a builder who was constructing houses that were designed by Frank Lloyd Wright Taliesin Fellowship. I met John Wesley Peters (who assumed direction of the fellowship after Wright's death). We were working on a house for the president of the H.J. Heinz in Pittsburgh, PA and another one for the director of the Allegheny County Airport. All of my uncles on my father's side of the family worked in construction as plumbers, electricians, carpenters and my grandfather was a superb furniture maker, so it fit the pattern. I was very impressed with architecture from this experience to say the least.

At the same time, another uncle, Merle D Evans, offered to pay my way through college if I would study

to be an attorney and go to work for him for four years after college and law school. I was very impressed with this offer to say the least.

My father, the smartest man in the world, (who only finished the sixth grade in school) had purchased a second grocery store in the next town over from where we lived with the idea that I would be the manager of the store and second in a chain of future super markets that would be owned by our family—me, my brother and sister. I was very impressed with this offer to say the least. I say the least because the whole family worked in our grocery stores after school and on Saturdays and I was not all that impressed with this as a vocation.

This from a previously published article in the USS Yancey AKA 93 newsletter:

"The Korean War started in the summer of 1950 and some of my friends got drafted into the Army. I considered foxholes and K rations and decided that I might best serve my country in the Navy. After all, someone had to have a bed to sleep in every night and hot meals three times a day, so I enlisted."

Upon my discharge from the Navy, I decided to go to college and the architecture won out. After all, how many rotten apples and rotten eggs can you learn to love in the grocery business. This disappointed my father a lot. He said that I was stupid for going to college. If I took the store I would earn twice as much as it would cost to go to college for six years and after paying what it would cost to go to college it would take me the rest of my life to break even. (There has been some truth to what he believed.)

This reminds me of a news broadcast that I heard recently. They reported that there was an airplane crash and there were some good news and some bad news. The good news was that

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

three people had survived the crash. The bad news was that the three people who survived the crash were lawyers.

Serving in the Navy gave me an opportunity to "grow up" and gave me time to make a decision about what would be the most rewarding path to my future. I made a lot of worthwhile friends and learned about other cultures. It was a very

rewarding experience and one that I have never regretted. If I could go back to that time, I would made the same decision to join.

The G.I Bill has been extremely helpful with college and now with the Medical benefits. I am proud to have served and have a great respect for our military personnel and the great job that they are doing under some very trying circumstances.

CHIPPING PAINT 101

When I went aboard the Yancey in June of 1951 there was already a surplus of about 100 sailors aboard. To keep us busy most of us were assigned to the deck force. The reserves were waiting out their time and were anxious to train us recruits. Since there were so many of us, they assigned smaller sections of the ship for us to take care of. I worked with about three other recruits on the 01 deck, aft of the fan room. We were given a chipping tool, a rag and some sandpaper. I probably had about 3 square feet of outside deck to care for. First you surveyed your assigned space for signs of rust. When you spotted some, you were told to start chipping and scraping around the rust until you could see no more signs of rust. Next the art of restoration of the chipped spot was explained. The former rust spot had to have a beveled paint area concentric to where the rust had been. This was accomplished by careful scraping and sanding until the undercoat of red lead could be seen. The finished, before painting, area looked like a set of colored rings starting with the bare metal, then a red lead ring followed by the deck grey as the outer ring. The process wasn't over yet. Next,

you filled out a "chit" (paper form) to go to the paint locker near number one hatch and order up a brush, a can of red lead and some deck grey paint. The paint locker was a mysterious place. You opened a hatch on the deck, lowered a bucket, containing the chit, with rope attached down into the black hole that was the paint locker. Down there were a couple of sailors, you didn't know who, that filled out the chit order.

Next it was back to your very own square footage of space being repaired. First you used the assigned rag to wipe the area clean, dip the brush into the container of red lead and brush the repair spot with the most care. After the red lead dried, it was time for applying the final coat of deck grey. This was done with the utmost care so that no brush marks could be seen. The final inspection was made by the leader of our team (a bosun). You were hoping for some praise that would make old salts gasp at the very wonder of repair job. Instead, you might have gotten a reply like "that-el-do" and "I have another challenging assignment for you". The last statement was taken as a complement and a possible career advancement.

Ken Groom

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.

ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of article submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

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.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 10/07	\$691.99
Funds received since 10/07	\$65.00
Funds available for 01/08	\$756.99
Funds expended for 01/08	\$165.20
Balance for 04/08	\$591.79

THANK YOU!

I want to thank Paul Dunn for agreeing to take on the effort of raising funds to sponsor a plaque at the Navy Memorial. Please consider donating for this plaque as it will keep the USS Yancey name alive as long as the Navy Memorial exists. I have seen this wall of ship plaques and was very impressed.

Thanks,
George Clifton

The newsletter is being mailed only to those who returned the coupon for USPS service. All others can access the newsletter on line at www.mlrsinc.com/yancey.