

# YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 15, Issue 3

July 2011



## MY JOB ON THE YANCEY

*Editor's Note: For the last issue we asked for stories about your job on the Yancey. Here is one sent in after the last issue was published.*

**From Ed McLaughlin:**

I came aboard the Yancey as a E-3 Radio striker...that meant I needed OJT to become Petty Officer 3rd Radioman.

I am a Amateur Radio operator (Ham) and when I went into the Navy I already knew the Morse code and was sending and receiving messages at a speed of 17 words a minute. I only needed 10 words a minute to graduate from Navy radio school. I got orders to the Philadelphia Naval Base to attend Radio School. On my first day in class, I was sitting and copying the code sent by the instructor (Chief Radioman). Since it was a first time class for everybody I was really bored with the slow speed. I was slouched over in the

seat and copying the code letter for letter but almost falling asleep. The Chief yelled at me and asked me what the H\_\_\_ I thought I was doing!!! I stood up and told him I already knew the code and could send and receive at 17 words a minute.

He yelled that I was a \$@%^&\*!(%\$ and said sit down and copy this: He turned the speed up on the tape machine up and grinned a malicious grin! I copied and gave it to him.....It must have been correct because you could see the pompous air deflate from him. He told me to shut up, sit down, copy code and see him after class.

At the end of the class I figured I was really in for a good A.. chewing! Instead he told me that he wanted me to report to him after chow for the evening class at 18:00. When I arrived early he showed me how to operate the code tape machine and the sound system and the operation of the various equipment in the room. He told me he

wanted me to teach the evening class for the rest of the course. He then took off for liberty or home or whatever. I spent the rest of radio school teaching classes at 18:00 everyday, and learning the transmitting and receiving equipment during the daytime classes. Sounds like fun huh! Well as it turned out, I was supposed to be learning how to use a typewriter to copy the code messages in the evening classes. I never went to the evening classes because I was teaching the code classes in the evening. The Chief said he would take care of my evening classes, and get me out of them for helping him. Since it was the first day I didn't even know that I was supposed to study typing in the evening class. When school was over I received orders to the Yancey. I reported aboard and was assigned to OPS division as soon as my security clearance came in. It didn't take long for the radio gang to realize I could not type. I would

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**Scenes from New Orleans**



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copy the code with a pencil and paper and then struggle to type the message on the correct message form.

The solution was a Navy Correspondence School typing class. I took the class work book and would spend my off hours in the radio shack typing the assignments. I would then send them in to the school for correction. I finally learned to type good enough using 2 fingers to pass the class.

As you can see the lesson here is this, Chiefs are smart and sneaky. He never asked if I could type. He just wanted his evenings off. So he covered the paperwork and went out for a beer!

SO NOW YOU KNOW THE REST OF THE STORY!

## A Word from Your Coordinator

This is the last newsletter until our reunion in New Orleans. I am really looking forward to it and hope many of others are as well. Let's make this the biggest reunion since our first one in Norfolk in 1995. Have a great summer and I'll see you in New Orleans.

**George Clifton**

## USS YANCEY REUNION

**OCTOBER 6-9,  
2011**

**NEW ORLEANS,  
LA**

**CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL**

# Strange Navy Traditions

*Editor's Note: For this issue we asked for your stories about strange Navy traditions that heard of or participated in such as Sea Bats, Crossing the Line, Mail Buoy Watch, etc. Here are your stories:*

## Rope Yarn Sunday

**By Kenneth Groom**

Rope Yarn Sunday is the day when sailors air their bedding, mend clothes and do a general personal clean up. I first heard about this when in boot camp.

In boot camp we hung our clothes on a special rope rigging. It consisted of a center pole like a mast which was as large as a telephone pole. Several large ropes were stretched from the top of this mast and these were used as clothes lines. The end of the ropes at the pole end could be lowered to access the ropes like clotheslines. We were issued small strands of woven string called "clothes stops". The clothes stops were used to tie (lash in sailor speak) the ends of our skivies, socks and other items. The instructions were to leave a one half inch of the clothes stop remaining after the article was lashed to the rope. The fly of our skivies was suppose to face the mast. There must have been other details, but I have been able to surpress them from my mind.

When we reported aboard the Yancey a few changes happened. The clothes stops were quickly discarded. I can only remember once when a new Ensign, holding inspection, wanted to know where our clothes stops were. Someone must have informed him, under their breath, what he could do with the clothes stops. Now we were introduced to Rope Yarn Sunday - Yancey style.

Usually Rope Yarn Sunday was held on a Wednesday at sea. We were to take our "sheets" (they had a special name we won't repeat here), pillow cases and send them to the laundry.

This was accomplished by throwing them in a large canvas dumpster to be picked up by the laundry crew on the designated day for our division. Then our mattresses and the webbing for holding same was taken top side and hung over the rail and secured so that the breeze created by the ship's motion would freshen them up.

So, today here I am doing my own Rope Yarn Sunday - not because it is a Wednesday, but because the weather has been forecasted to be 77F and a very nice day after a long, long wet winter. I look forward to the smell of fresh laundry that only the outside air can impart. Maybe tonight I will dream of my time at sea on the Yancey .

**From Ed McLaughlin:**

I remember when I first came aboard and into the radio shack.....we were doing routine maintenance on some of the radio gear.....one of the guys told me to run to the ET shack and get a Fallopien tube. Having done well in high school Biology, I knew I was being sent on a "snipe hunt" and would be the butt of jokes for weeks. Knowing all this I left the radio shack, took a tour around the ship, above and below decks. Stopped at the mail room and sent out some letters and took so long I even went to chow. When I finally returned to the radio shack they wondered, (with straight faces), what took so long to get the replacement tube. I told them I knew what a Fallopien tube was, but I had decided to play their game in reverse. That was the last time I was sent on a "snipe hunt".

## Adult Truths

- Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.
- Obituaries would be a lot more interesting if they told you how the person died.



## WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates have 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.

**Howard Obritis**  
(1964)EM2  
133 Shinnecock Ln  
East Islip, NY 11730  
631-224-9268

**Fred Quinn**  
(1969-79) BM3  
702 Coleman Dr  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
757-220-3595  
fquinn@aol.com



## TAPS

The Yancey Memories was notified of the following shipmate's death. Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family 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.

**Milton Schroeder**  
(1944-46) RM2/c  
Died May 15, 2011

## Where Did the Peace Sign Come From?

All the "skivvy wavers"...SM's from OC division will know the answer to this!!!

The olive branch came from ancient Greece, the dove from the Bible...but where did that circle with the chicken footprint come from?

Back in the 60s, when the anti-nuclear movement was getting into full stride, the marchers all wore clothing or ornaments displaying the circle with the chicken foot (peace symbol). But, where did it come from? It was actually the brain child of a London textile designer by the name of Gerald Holtom. Holtom wanted to create a symbol for marchers to carry on banners and signs at "Ban the Bomb" rallies.

Holtom used the semaphore alphabet signals for the letters "N" and "D". The "N" stood for nuclear and the "D" for disarmament. He superimposed these semaphore signals together and placed them inside a circle.

The semaphore signal for the letter "N" would be made by a signalman (SM) holding a signal flag in each hand and angled toward the ground at about a 120 degree angle. The semaphore signal for the letter "D" would be made by the signalman holding a signal flag in each hand, with the flag in the left hand straight down toward the ground, and the flag in the right hand held straight over head.



(N)



(D)

=



So, now we all know what the "skivvy wavers" aboard ship already guessed!

Till next time....

Fair winds and following seas!!!

Ed McLaughlin

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

### More Adult Truths

- Map Quest really needs to start their directions on #5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood.
- Bad decisions make good stories.
- I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap with I was younger.
- Was learning cursive really necessary?

## Yancey History

Continued from April 2011 issue:  
Submitted by Henry Diebel

Yancey was reassigned to Service Force, Pacific Fleet, and home ported at San Francisco, Calif., on 11 November. 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 68.1.2 which also included the 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 title as "The World's Stormiest Sea."

Yancey reached 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, Ser-

vice 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 advance bases in the Western Pacific (WestPac), 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 1968.

To be continued in next issue:

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Balance after 04/11	<b>\$2.41</b>
Funds received since 04/11	<b>\$ 610.00</b>
Funds available for 07/11	<b>\$612.41</b>
Funds expended for 07/11	<b>\$179.67</b>
Balance for 01/11	<b>\$ 432.74</b>

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](http://www.mlrsinc.com/yancey).

Thank you to all who helped support the newsletter with your contributions. We greatly appreciate your support.

## 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.

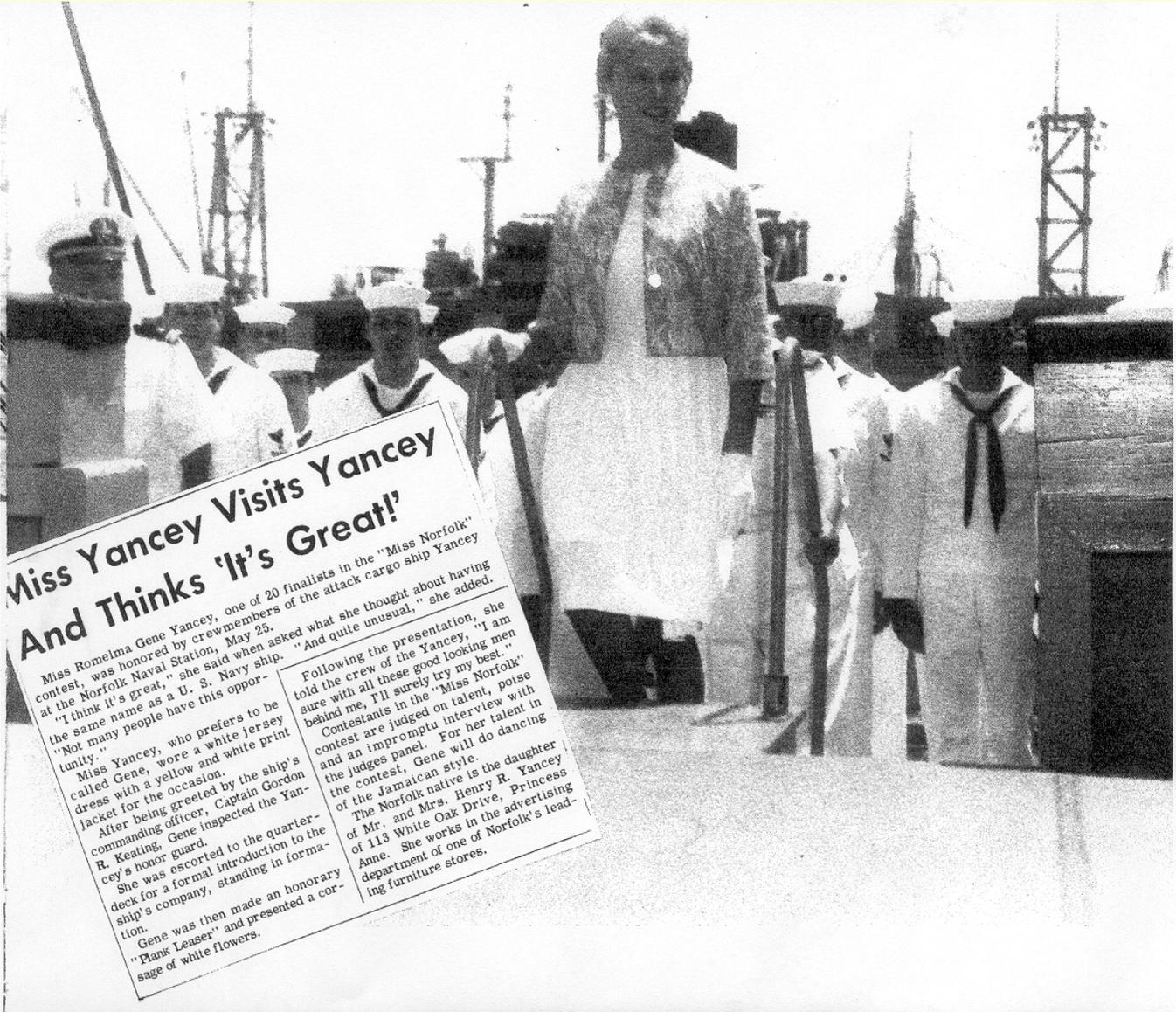
ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of article submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

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

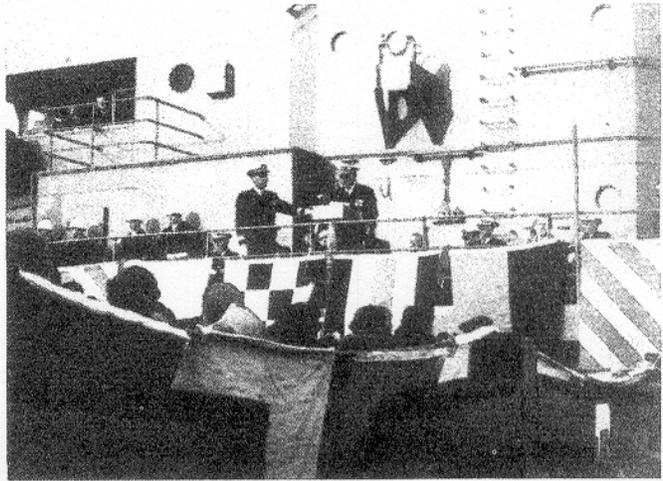
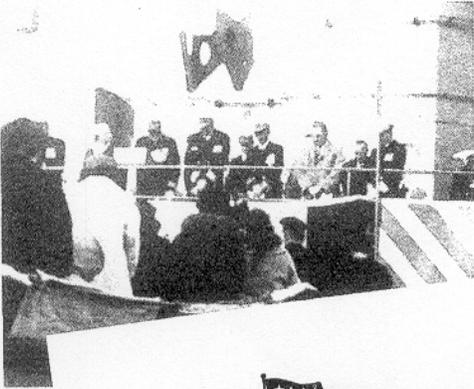
You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your stories and suggestions.

FROM THE USS YANCEY AKA 93 MED CRUISE 1962

Submitted by Phil Messer EN2 Then, Retired 1979 as ENCM



# COMMISSIONING



  
 The Commanding Officers, Officers and Crew  
 request the honor of your presence  
 at the commissioning of the  
 United States Ship Yancey (AKA-93)  
 at  
 The Seawall, foot of S. W. Washington Street  
 Portland, Oregon  
 2:30 o'clock, Friday afternoon, 17 November 1961  
 Naval Uniform  
 Service Dress Blue Bravo  
 P.O. Box 90311  
 Everett 319

