



YANCEY MEMORIES

COORDINATORS MESSAGE



I hope this newsletter finds everyone well and staying safe. It's been an unusual year so far and doesn't seem to be getting any better at this point in time. First the reunion was canceled and now it seems that Thanksgiving and Christmas are in jeopardy. Instead of 22 of us, there will be my wife and I. We can only hope and pray that 2021 will be a better year. Wishing Happy Holidays to you and your family from Yancey Memories!

I think you will enjoy this newsletter as it has a variety of stories submitted by shipmates. Please keep sending us your stories of time on the Yancey or afterwards. You don't even have to be a great writer as Ric will spruce them up if necessary. You can send them to Ric or myself. Remember without you there would be no newsletter. Stay safe and as always feel free to contact me with any questions. George Clifton clifs@ameritech.net

A YANCEY SHORT by JERRY NICHOLS (RM1 1961-62)

In the early 60's when Kennedy was President, he wanted all military personnel, to become physically fit and to stay that way, so he implemented a policy that everyone under the age of 40 had to do physical exercise at least one time each week, we did aboard ship. We would take turns, some of the divisions would go to the main deck, everyone couldn't go at the same time, we didn't have the room. The chiefs would direct the type of exercise we would do, they were just about the only ones aboard that were over 40. Everyone had a good attitude about all of the exercises we'd do, we would all joke about it, some would act silly, but all of us did all the exercises. The only thing bad about it was, it didn't last long enough. Like all good things, it came to an end. It only lasted about 1 month, then the Captain stopped enforcing it, guess he thought our duties were more important.

Ridin' Out a Typhoon on the "Old Yance" by Mike Steinberg, QM 1955-1956

One of the memories I will carry to my grave, is riding out a Typhoon in 1955 or 1956. I was 17 and we got under way from Naval Supply Center in Alameda, going under the Golden Gate Bridge. We steamed westerly by the Great Circle Route, headed for Yokosuka, Japan. The scuttlebutt story was, when the Typhoon warning came, the Captain thought he could bypass it. We wound up in the Northeast quadrant of this major storm. That's was worst place to be, because the storm rotated counter-clock wise, and the most force is generated in that area. I'd been in some other Gales, and when we would ask the "Old Salts" is this rough? They'd laugh, and say no, we'll let you know when it's rough. Soon, we were really in it. Again, I don't want to put a number on the wind speed, but I'll just tell you all what I saw and heard. My rate was a Quartermaster (I changed it to Signalmen later). So, I stood the Quartermaster of the watch on the bridge. Looking forward, I was seeing huge mountainous swells, that we were looking up at, and that were not green, they were blue. The old Yance would ride to the top of one of those, and the bow would come out of the water on the other side and we would be looking down into this big dark canyon....the bow would hit the water, and send a huge spray of water outward, with a resounding "Boom!" The whole ship would shutter and shake, and then it would begin again and again. The wind was getting stronger by the minute. You couldn't go outside without a life line, and even then, you could be gone. We didn't experience a complete white out, but we were getting something just short of that. It damaged some of the heavy mil canvass on the cargo holds. The only thing left of the Ensign was a small rag, and you could hear the wind...it was a sound that I had never heard before...that was spooky. I went on watch on the bridge, and we began having a problem. We lost communication between the Engine Room and the Bridge. In order to stay on one spot in the world, and let the storm blow past us, we had to maintain a certain amount of turns on the propeller shaft to maintain headway. The officer of the deck would make adjustments. So, they set up a relay with the Bosons' Mate of the watch, and me, and we would run up and down between the bridge and Engine Room. When we got to the Engine Room hatch, and stepped inside you had to go down a metal walk ladder to find the Chief Engineer. Alongside, were big diameter super heated steam lines. Probably 800 to 1,000 PSI steam lines. They sat in open saddles, and when the bow hit the water, the lines would jump almost out of the saddles and bang. There was a rack there, with cut up lengths of broom handles. You can't see a leak from a super heated steam line, I was told it could cut you in two. So, you grabbed a wooden handle and waved it in front of you, as you went down the ladder. It would supposedly cut the broom handle in two if there was a leak. We ended up having to do this through the whole storm. For about 3 ½ to 4 days, all we had to eat was good old Navy "mystery meat" sandwiches, and black coffee that would remove paint. Down in the living quarters, it was a nightmare, when I saw those Old Salts again, I could see a serious look in their eyes. I saw them securing themselves into their sleeping cots. So, I did the same thing. Good thing I did. One night they either got us a little crossed up in our headway, or we got hit with a rogue wave. The old Yance all of sudden listed way over to port, and when it did all the lockers on the bulkheads that weren't locked, opened, and we got pelted with a ton of shoes, clothes, toothbrushes, bar soap, radios, banjo's, guitars, you name it. Guy's were falling out of their racks and some were screaming. But, the old gal pulled us through, & brought us home. I remember that after we returned to the states, we ended up in Hunters Point Shipyards, and went into dry-dock later. I don't know if the storm had anything to do with that, but I wouldn't be surprised.

Profile: Ed McLaughlin, RM3 1965-1967

I traveled a somewhat unique route to arrive aboard the USS Yancey. I received my "Draft Notice" in the mail one morning, and my world stopped. At that time, I was a successful Radio Announcer / Newsmen / DJ on a large radio station in Pittsburgh, Pa. The next morning, I drove to the large military recruiting office in Pittsburgh in the hope of other options. While I was looking at the wall of brochures for each branch, I was approached by a Naval Officer in dress whites. He called my name and I turned and recognized him as a friend of my father from our Church. He asked what I was doing there. He asked if I was still an amateur radio operator, and when I told him I was he took me into his office and told me he could get me into Navy Radio School if I joined the Naval Reserve. As we talked, I found out I would be serving 2 years reserve, 2 years active duty, & 2 more years reserve duty. I raised my hand, took the oath and charted a new 6-year path for my life. My 2-year reserve duty acted as my boot camp and I was sent to radio school the end of that term. When I arrived at the Philadelphia Naval Base for school, I was assigned "Fire Watch". The next morning, I was very tired from the bus trip and the mid watch and actually fell asleep during that first day of class. You can imagine how the Chief yelled. I told him I was a "Ham Operator" and already copied code at 17 words a minute. He told me to report back to him at 17:00. I figured I was in big trouble. There was also a parallel class that took typing and equipment during the day and Morse Code in the evening. The Chief told me I was now assigned to teach the evening Morse Code class. I told him that I did not know how to type and he said he would take care of it. I assumed I would take typing and equipment during the day sessions, but instead I was assigned clean up work. 4 weeks into this schedule I was told to report to Personnel. When I arrived, I was told I was going by bus to Kennedy Airport and by plane to San Juan Puerto Rico and wait for the USS Yancey to arrive in port. It was now November 1965. At the base I was assigned work at the PX and then the base Post Office. I was replacing a sailor who was facing Courts Marshall charges for drop kicking mail parcels that were marked "FRAGILE". His third offense. When the Yancey arrived I was transferred aboard. I was assigned OPS Division but given compartment cleaning and paint chipping duties until my security clearance arrived. On my first day in the radio shack I received an orientation and met my fellow radiomen. I was assigned to copy a code broadcast looking for any messages sent to the Yancey. When I sat down with a pencil and paper and started copying the code all hell broke loose. The E6 asked how I got out of radio school without knowing how to type. My answer was that I had taught code at the school. I was given a correspondence class in typing, and assigned compartment cleaning duties and minor duties in the radio shack until I could type. I spent my evenings in Radio 1 banging away at the typewriter, and copying code broadcasts to keep up my speed skills until I passed the typing exam and was given full access to the radio shack. One of my jobs was "Routing the Message Board". This turned out to be a very likeable assignment that took me all over the Yancey and allowed me to meet the officers and other shipmates. Eventually I made E4 RM3 and served out the rest of my 2-year active duty. One final memory was when I was given permission to bring my ham radio aboard and operate it in port. The most fun was running "Phone Patches" back home while we were in Port in Naples at Christmas, and contacting the US Base in Antarctica. I am still a ham operator and have been since 1960....60 fun years. I thank the Navy for the radio operating discipline I learned, and the fantastic shipmates I met along the way.

USS Yancey Reunion Group



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A Newsletter Exclusively
for Former USS Yancey
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THE WORLD IS OUR BEACHHEAD Shipmates Who Have Passed

Doyal Clark
CS3 1954
Deceased 7/2020

Julius Kovaks
Seaman 1st Class - 1946
Deceased 9/4/2001

Milo Poppen
SK3 1952-1953
Deceased 6/11/2020

Jay Schwall
PC2 1952-1955
Deceased 3/26/2020

GUESS WHAT I SAW ON NETFLIX by RAY LITTLEFIELD RD3 1969 - 1970

Recently I was watching a WWII documentary and believe I saw a Yancey landing craft! It was an LCVP landing on a beach, with a side view of the boat. On the bow was the number 93 but no other designation, just the 93. Today we display the hull number and class (YA), but I don't know what they were doing in WWII. This film clip appeared to be actual war footage. The information to see this film clip is shown below, for anyone interested to see it.

Netflix Series -

"Greatest Events of WWII in color"

Season 1, Episode 10 Hiroshima

You can find it - 01:09 minutes into the program

