

YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 18, Issue 1

January 2014



OPERATION HIGHJUMP

Memories from LINDY LEO, USN RM3 USS YANCEY AKA 93
As told to Ed McLaughlin USN RM3 USS YANCEY 93

At our October 2013 Reunion in Washington, DC, I had the fantastic luck to meet and chat with Lindy Leo who served aboard the Yancey in 1946-47 during Operation Highjump. Since that meeting Lindy and I have shared e-mails detailing his time in the frozen Antarctic. Most of us were probably somewhere warm while Lindy was living it up in subzero weather.

Let me give us a little history lesson and what led up to a teenage Lindy serving on the Yancey.

Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd had led four other expeditions to Antarctica between 1925 and 1935, but this would be the first entirely Naval expedition, with the exception of a few Army and civilian observers and scientists. While plans and preparations were being made in late 1946, Lindy was serving as ship's company at the tiny USN air gunnery range based south of Jacksonville, Florida. When the base received the word that crew

was needed for a fleet exercise, Lindy said he jumped at the chance for a ship "because as a certified youngster, I wanted the chance to "See the World".

In Lindy's words:

Transfer orders led me to the USS Yancey, then in Norfolk, Virginia. In a short time the ship sailed to and through the Panama Canal. I was amazed at the "locks" for passing through the Canal. The ship entered a lock station, similar to a boxed in container, where a forward and rear gate/lock sealed the Yancey in place. Then water was let in until the level of the next compartment was reached. The next forward gate was opened, then we were towed by manned ropes on both sides of the ship to the next forward lock and so on, until the Yancey transited the Panama Canal. Lindy observed that the Pacific Ocean is at a

higher sea level in Panama than the Atlantic Ocean. Then he laughingly wondered that if the locks were left open would all the oceans become level.

The Yancey's next port was the Naval Supply Depot at San Pedro, California. After Loading we headed to Port Hueneme near Ventura California. A Construction Battalion (CB's) embarked as passengers/workers for the Antarctica Operation Highjump journey and project. To me then, the Antarctic was just an obscure world region located on a geography map, not a world science base and tourist mecca like the present.

The Yancey was soon underway, and after crossing the Equator, the further south we traveled the weather was noticeable cooler and sometimes stormy. The water became grayer in color and rougher. We began encountering "growlers".

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

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Growlers are smaller pieces of "ice masses" that had broken off or melted off, then ice floes which are large areas/sheets of frozen ice, and finally, the biggies.....the ice bergs themselves. These floating mountains of ice were a sight to behold.

The Yancey continued on her pre-charted route through the floes, but eventually we became stuck in the ice for a day or so. This was a deep concern for most of the officers and crew, but no panic mode. For me, at my age, I didn't know any better. After several days the USCGC Northwind arrived and proceeded to systematically cut and clear paths through the floes so that the squadron could continue its trip.

During this time, the Yancey

crossed the Antarctic Circle, went through the Weddell Sea near the Palmer Peninsula and on to the Ross Sea where we reached our destination and docked beside the Ross Ice Shelf using a "Deadman" sunk through the ice into the Bay of Whales. The USS Mount Olympus GC-8 was the flag ship and the Yancey and 11 other ships along with 4000 men began the job of off-loading supplies for the Tent City called "Little America". Off-loading was set in port and starboard shifts of six hours on and six hours off for all hands.

The Seas Bees, along with ship's company, began constructing an air strip by laying corrugated metal sheets/strips for aircraft as a runway and support, and "Little America" became a thriving city. Being on work parties we were able to see Emperor penguins up

close. Emperor penguins are located only in this part of the world and I had never seen or heard of a penguin before.

Exploration parties trekked to the South Pole looking for the last encampment and succeeded. Upon return we found they had brought back frozen food left by previous expeditions. The food was taken to Admiral Byrd's headquarters, where it was thawed, cooked and eaten with positive results. Lindy wondered if this could be the advent of frozen food as we know it today!

As you can see it was not all work, but things were about to turn worse for one shipmate.....

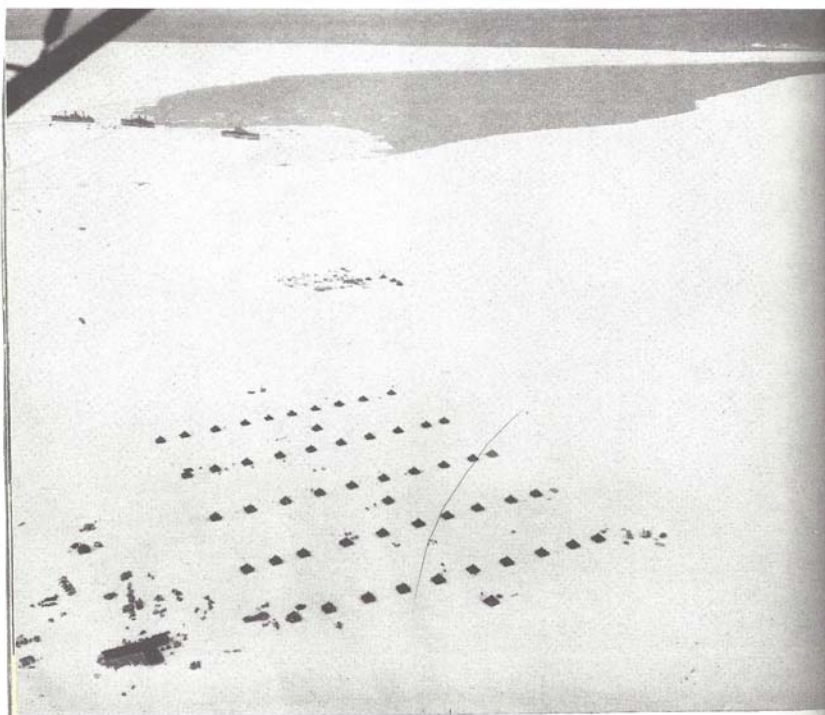
See you next Newsletter
Lindy & Ed

PHOTOS FROM OPERATION HIGHJUMP



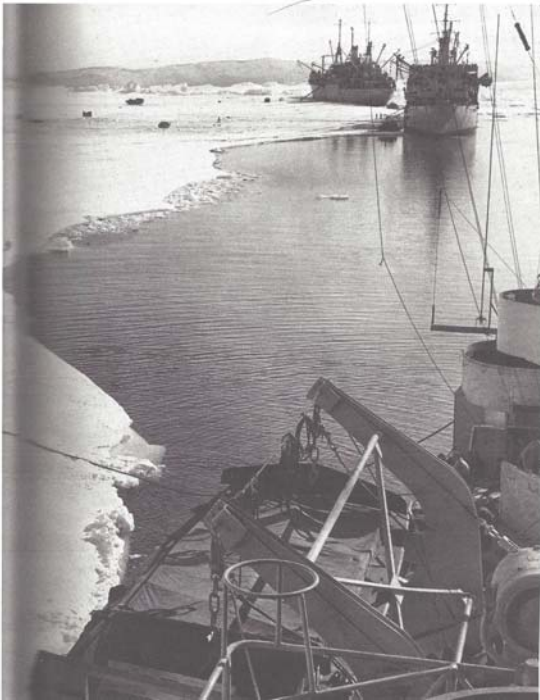
Emperor Penguin

Editor's Note: If you were part of Operation Highjump, we would love to hear from you about your experiences. **Please** send your story to us at Premier Reunion Services, PO Box 11438, Hickory, NC 28603



Like Ink Dots on a White Sheet Appear the Tents of Little America IV
Antarctic base of Operation Highjump, as the Navy called its exploration of the continent, was this tent city on the edge of the Ross Shelf Ice. The flagship *Mount Olympus* and the cargo ships *Yancey* and *Merrick* are moored in the Bay of Whales. In the lower left-hand corner is the galley and mess tent. In about the center of the picture is the air operations section, with an airstrip for ski-equipped planes.

Little America and Yancey at The Ross Ice Shelf



USS Yancey Operation Highjump
Off Loading Operations



Ice "Growler"

A Word from Your Coordinator

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I also hope you are all surviving this extreme winter weather. I don't have a location yet for the 2014 reunion, however I can tell you we will be joining the USS Rankin. They are forming a reunion committee, of which I will be a member, to determine the location, dates etc. for future reunions. They plan to meet this month so I should have more information before the next newsletter. There will be a 2014 reunion so keep early October open. I'm also still in the process of forming an official USS Yancey Association which is more involved than I first thought. Hopefully I can provide more information about that in the next newsletter as well. If anyone has questions or suggestions please feel free to contact me by email or phone.

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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.

Lindy Leo (1946-49)
1203 Burton St
Silver Springs, MD 20910
301-608-8904
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hellinleo@netzero.net



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 PRS so their names can be included in TAPS and be added to the Honor Roll.

Jim Mathis
(1944-46) SSML3 (SH3)
Boat Div
Died September 19, 2013

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 10/13	\$219.56
Funds received since 10/13	\$30.00
Funds available for 01/14	\$249.56
Funds expended for 01/14	\$133.51
Balance for 04/14	\$116.05*

***Funds will be needed for the next issue.**

The newsletter is mailed only to those who returned the coupon for USPS service. All others can access the newsletter online at

www.mlrsinc.com/yancey.

Contributions may be sent to Premier Reunion Services at our address on the cover. Make checks to Premier Reunion Services and be sure to note that is for Yancey Memories.

FROM THE USS YANCEY AKA 93 MED CRUISE 1962

Submitted by Phil Messer EN2 Then, Retired 1979 as ENCM

R Division



Ltjg. J. Kyle
OE DIVISION OFFICER



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P. Stephan, RMSN M. Brak, SN

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ET1



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Ens. L. T. DuPont
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