

YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 7, Issue 3

July 2003



Special Points of Interest

- **Read Mike Steinberg's memories of the Yancey in our cover story. Do you remember any of these things?**
- **Page two has the WELCOME MAT with seven newly located shipmates. Send them a hello.**
- **Can you name some uses of the fantail other than its true purpose? Ken Groom has some on page three.**
- **George Rohrman submits some origins of familiar terms in his article on page three & four.**
- **Want your family to know what it was like being in the Navy? Show them the hilarious article on page five.**

MIKE STEINBERG'S MEMORIES

I served on the USS Yancey in 1955 through 1956. I have a HUNDRED stories to tell about her, and the men who served on that ship.

Yes, I remember Bob Dinwiddie very well. He was one of the nicest guys on the Yancey. He was also looked up to with much respect, as he was a good sailor and shipmate. We were back in the states, and I don't remember if we were docked at Naval Supply Center Oakland/Alameda, or Treasure Island, San Francisco. It's just been too long now. Anyway, I told Bob Dinwiddie that I had a girlfriend named Joan, that I

went to high school with in Los Gatos, California. She was raven haired, blue-eyed, and very beautiful, and I was really in love with her. I had no way to get down there to see her. Bob said, "I've got a 74 Harley, and I'll ride you down there." I told him, "O.K., thanks, Bob." We took off on his Harley and went down to her house and I met Joan there. Her parents really liked Bob. By the time we got out of there, it was getting very late. I remember riding on the back of Bob Dinwiddie's Harley 74; both of us in dress blues, flying down the bayshore freeway at 85 mph with our hair streaming back, trying to get back

to the Yancey. By the way, Joan married someone else!

I remember being in dry dock on the Yancey, at Hunters Point, California. A bunch of us in A Division got stuck on Mess Cooking. I swore I'd find something else to do in the Navy so I wouldn't have to do that anymore. Man...I hated Mess Cooking! I had this friend in O Division, who was a Quarter-master. I only remember his first name, "Bennie." He was from Colorado. He started teaching me Semi-phore, and the Morse code. I worked hard at it, and used to go up on the signal bridge at night after duty

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hours and send I_N_T_ Striker to all the other ships trying to get someone to talk to me by 12 inch signal light. I kept after it until I finally talked Ernie Goodrich, QM1 in O Division to let me transfer over.

I remember Lt(jg) Magnus, the ship's navigator, who became my boss in O Division. He was the best officer I ever met. I remember the Captain and the Exec (might have been D.E. Henning, Lt CMDR) ordered Mr. Magnus to stop fraternizing with the crew. He used to go on liberty with us once in a while. He wasn't happy about it, but he came and explained why he couldn't hang with us anymore. We understood. He was the kind of officer that you'd march to Hell with, if he asked you to go there. Mr. Magnus also started a ship's pistol team, which I belonged to, and we used to shoot all the time. I learned how to nail drive with the Colt .45 Auto from him. A lot of it is in how you grip the weapon.

When we were in San Diego, I remember everyone on the Yancey had to go to "Camp Elliot," Marine Corps gunnery and amphibious training school. We all had to qualify. Out of possible 100, I shot a 96, and got beat by some Jg., who I don't remember, by one point; he shot a 97. Once, later, we were in route to the Far East by the Great Circle Route and out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, in the middle of nowhere. Some of the old salts used to say the nearest land is 1 mile away... straight down! We ran into an old Jap sea-going Marine mine that one of our look-outs spotted, and it must have broken loose after all those years from its cable. It was pretty impressive, and damn, was it big! It had the horns sticking out to detonate it, should something be unlucky enough to bump into it. We laid off the mine, about 75 yards away, and the Exec started hollering for me to report. I did, and was told to check out an M-1 rifle, because another guy and I were the best shots on the ship.

We stood on the pitching deck, trying to hit one of those horns. I finally hit one, but it didn't detonate. I yelled up to the Exec that maybe we should try with one of the .20 mm's on the signal bridge. He told me to do it, and when we hit it...man, what a bang. I wonder if anyone remembers that?

One of my best friends on the Yancey was Ray Sutton from Bakersfield, CA. I took Ray home with me to Gustine, CA once. I took off with an old girlfriend that showed up suddenly and left Ray. My dad and Ray went out to the bar and got drunk and had a pretty good time. Man, did I get a chewing out from Dad for that! Ray wasn't too happy with me for a while either. I have an old picture of Ray and me that was taken in one of those quickie photo booths they used to have in the old A train terminal in San Francisco, CA. Ray and I used to go out on liberty all the time and raise hell...in the states and in the Orient. That's another story. I liked Ray Sutton a lot. I tried for years to find him in the Bakersfield area, and I never could. I called every Sutton I could find.

Mike Steinberg

HELP COLLECT YANCEY STORIES

Ken Groom, the Yancey Historian, would like to help collect "Yancey Stories" at the next reunion. If you could bring your notes with dates, places, and incidents, he will provide help where you might need it to publish more stories in the newsletter. We especially would like to get stories from all generations of shipmates. Bring the information to the reunion or send them to Ken (kdg345@aol.com) for any editing or help you might need. All stories will be credited to the shipmate sending the information. Ken will send them back to the originator for final review.

Ken Groom



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.

Dale Hall
(1956-57) FA/Fireman (DC Striker)
780 Mt Fury SW
Issaquah, WA 98027
425-392-0505

Donald Charron
62 L Patricia Ave
North Stonington, CT 06359-1036
doncharron1@yahoo.com

David Cowgill
P O Box 263
Winchester, AR 71677
scowgill@seark.net

Joseph Beilouny
87 White Pine Way
Medford, NY 11763
Jbeilouny@aol.com

Robert Krok (1963-65) SN
504 Jefferson Ave
Jermyn, PA 18433
570-876-4603
rukr9@aol.com

Bernard Barrowclough (1947-49) MM2
500 Highway 75 Space 50
San Diego, CA 91932
619-423-1938
phybear@sbcglobal.net

Tom Mikles (1957) QM1
Rt 4 Box 406
Sayre, OK 73662
580-225-2680
clifs@ameritech.net



MAIL CALL

PUMPING IRON-YANCEY STYLE

The fantail of the Yancey was used for many purposes other than a location for the 5 inch 38 caliber gun. Sometimes it was used for unauthorized liberty called "Fantail Liberty"—down the stern hawser and to the dock—climbing back up could be a problem unless you were crafty and came aboard when the Officer of the Deck was not looking—so I have been told and witness on one occasion.

Also, at sea we were taught, as the Deck Apes, that a couple of half hitches on the handle of a swab and of course the other end of the line tied to the fantail railing. Then it was over the side for a few minutes to clean the swab. Sometimes a sailor got the idea that this would be a good way to clean clothes. Problem was, left too long, and the end of the line comes up with a few tattered white remains of what was once a good set of dungarees.

But the best use of the fantail, I remember was when Max Murray and Jerry Freddie got the idea to use it for their body building efforts. Freddie (also known as Freddie the Fireman—the backbone of the bilges) worked in the engine room, I believe. He was good at welding and had constructed a set of pulleys and cables along with some weights on one end and handholds on the other end. The bulkhead just forward of the 5 inch gun was used to mount the body building gear. The two of them would be seen with jugs of water walking back to the fantail together at a given time for their workout. This was no ordinary workout, since at sea the ship was pitching and rolling. At the fantail it seemed to me that the ship was making a rotating motion about the horizontal axis of the ship. This meant that Freddie and Max would be pulling

forward and the ship either helped them or worked against them to do their body work. Somehow they seemed to sense all of this motion and sort of get in tune with the ship's motion. It seemed to pay off, because they both were muscular specimens.

Submitted by:
Ken Groom
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Dear Mr. Criston,

Ray Wilson gave me your address and said you might be able to help me. I am George Boyer's wife Bonnie. George was a Radioman 2/c aboard the USS Yancey from the time it was commissioned Oct. 11, 1944 until it went into Philadelphia Navy Yard, March 30, 1946. George passed away Nov. 12, 1999.

There are no government records of anyone going on liberty to Hiroshima even though shipmates and articles I've sent indicate otherwise. They say the Yancey was anchored ten miles off shore from Kure Harbor and "NO liberties" were assigned. So I would be every grateful to hear from anyone who went there and can verify the fact that indeed liberties were initially given.

George was a fifty-year member of the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars service organizations. Our Service Officer, Jake Jacobs, feels this should not be overlooked.

Please send your information to:
Jake Jacobs-Service Officer
VFW Post 6306
Box 1344
Topock, AZ 86436
jakebob@hotmail.com

Jake has sent all my information to the VA in Washington, DC.

Thank you so much.
Sincerely,
Bonnie Boyer
4912 Marion Ave
Cypress, CA 90630
beadsbybonnieb@aol.com (Please use USS Yancey in the subject line.)

(Editor's Note: In the October 2001 issue of the Yancey Memories, we printed an account by Dr. Bill Clinite, who visited Hiroshima. The story originally appeared in the Yancey's newsletter dated September 20, 1945.)

Yancey Memories,

I don't have many stories to tell, but one is that I was on the Yancey from January of 1955 to February of 1956 when I left the ship to go to Treasure Island for discharge. We did make several trips across and carried supplies and was in one terrible typhoon, ran backwards for 4 days at flank speed and were only going about 2 knots. That was very scary. Also got to see my first humpback whale as the captain circled the whale for several trips so all the crew got a chance to see the whale. I was a second class boilerman and spent most all my time below decks, but it was good duty.

Ray Allen
AAllenrallen104@aol.com

EVER WONDER WHERE THE TERM _____ CAME FROM?

"Log Book" In the old days of sail, a ship's speed was determined by casting a small log secured to a line from the bow of the ship. By paying out the marked length of the line and timing how long it took the log to reach the stern, the ship's speed could then be calculated. During each watch, the log had to be cast every hour, and the ship's speed and compass course noted in a book for navigation purposes. It soon became customary, and then required, to note other observations, and any happenings on board. Ever signed the deck log?

"Squared Away" Square rigging sailing ships would set the backs of their sails directly into the wind for their best speed. A ship standing out smartly from harbor with every sail thus set presented a neat, purpose-

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ful appearance. The term soon became applied as a compliment to any competent sailor, particularly one with a neat appearance. And of course, we were all squared away sailors all the time. Right?

“Mess Decks” Mess—Middle English in origin. ‘Mes’ meaning a dish. Hence the term, ‘a mess of pottage.’ The word in English originally denoted four, and at large or formal dinners, the guests were seated in ‘fours.’ The average gun crew size was eight men (2 sets of four), and they worked, ate, stood watches, and slept together as a unit. This is the true origin of ‘mess decks,’ where the ship’s crew take their meals.

“Crow’s Nest” A raven, or crow, was an essential part of the Vikings’ navigational equipment. These land-lubbing birds were carried on board to help the ship’s navigator determine where the closest land lay when weather prevented sighting the shore. In cases of poor visibility, a crow was released and the navigator plotted a course corresponding to the bird’s flight path because the crow invariably headed towards land. The Norsemen carried the birds in a cage secured to the top of the mast. Later on, as ships grew and the lookout stood his watch in a tub located high on the main mast, the name “crow’s nest” was given to this tub.

“Hawsepipe” Hawser is Middle English in origin. ‘Halse,’ and Old Norse, ‘Hals,’ meaning ‘neck.’ This is a thick, large rope (about the size of a man’s neck) used for towing or securing the ship to its anchor, or tied to a pier. This is also the origin of the word ‘hawsepipe,’ which refers to the hole in the bow area where the ship’s anchor chain runs out.

“Boot Camp” This is said to have come from post-Civil War days, when experienced or “true” sailors

did much of their work barefoot, especially when scrubbing decks. New recruits from the Midwest did not like doing it in this fashion, and so would go ashore as soon as possible to buy a pair of rubber boots to protect their feet.

“Boatswain’s Pipe” One of the oldest and most distinctive pieces of nautical equipment, the pipe or flute, was used in Greece and Rome to keep the stroke of galley slaves. The pipe was used in the Crusades to call English cross bowmen on deck for attack. In time, the pipe came to be used as a badge of office by commanders. The whistle was used for salutes to distinguished persons as well as to pass orders. The parts of the pipe are the buoy, gun, keel and shackle.

“Slush Fund” A slushy slurry of fat was obtained by boiling or scraping the empty salted meat storage barrels. This stuff called “slush” was often sold ashore by the ship’s cook for the benefit of himself or the crew. The money so derived became known as a slush fund. I know I have benefited from a “Slush Fund” a time or two.

“Holystone” (pieces of soft sandstone used to scrub the teak decks of battleships, and other ships with wooden decks) The sandstones were nicknamed the “holystone” since their use always brought a man to his knees, it must be holy!. For ease of handling and stowage, it was almost exactly the same size as the average Bible, or “holy” book.

“Doughnut” or “Donut” When first invented, it was a ring of bread dough deep-fried in fat and flavored with sugar, honey or molasses. A popular treat in early American history, both out West and at sea. Legend has it that an early New England sea captain by the name of Hansen Gregory designed them so that helmsmen on watch could slip them over the spokes of the ship’s wheel, thus making them handy for eating or allowing them to cool if they were freshly made. Don’t know the truth of this, but it is an interesting twist.

“Beer Day” It’s a pleasure normally verboten in the U.S. Navy, but one that’s appearing more often as ships extend their deployments. Ships have “beer days” every time they log 45 days under way without a port visit.

“Dead Horse” When a sailor pays off a debt to the command (advance pay, overpayments, etc.) they say they’ve paid off the Dead Horse. The saying comes from a tradition of British sailors. British seamen, apt to be ashore and unemployed for considerable periods of time between voyages, generally preferred to live in boarding houses near the piers while waiting for sailing ships to take on crews. During these periods of unrestricted liberty, many ran out of money, so innkeepers carried them on credit until hired out for another voyage. When a seaman was booked on a ship, he was customarily advanced a month’s wages, if needed, to pay off his boarding house debt. Then, while paying back the ship’s master, he worked for nothing but “salt horse” the first several weeks aboard. Salt horse was the staple diet of early sailors and it wasn’t exactly tasty cuisine. Consisting of low quality beef that had been heavily salted, the salt horse was tough to chew and even harder to digest. When the debt had been repaid, the salt horse was said to be dead, and it was a time for great celebration among the crew. Usually, an effigy of a horse was constructed from odds and ends, set afire and then cast afloat to the cheers and hilarity of the ex-debtors.

Written by Greg Peterman USN (Ret)
Submitted by George Rohrman

**USS YANCEY
2003 REUNION
OCTOBER 23-26
RADISSON BEACHFRONT
HOTEL
CORPUS CHRISTI,
TX**

HOW TO SIMULATE BEING A SAILOR

Submitted by Ken Groom

1. Buy a steel dumpster, paint it gray inside and out, and live in it for six months.
2. Run all the pipes and wires in your house exposed on the walls.
3. Repaint you entire house every month.
4. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of he bathtub and move the shower head to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down.
5. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high.
6. Once a week, blow compressed air up your chimney, making sure the wind carries the soot onto your neighbor's house. Ignore his complaints.
7. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back doors so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
8. Once a month, take all major appliances apart and then reassemble them.
9. Disassemble and inspect your lawn mower every week.
10. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, turn your water heater temperature up to 200 degrees. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, turn the water heater off. On Saturdays and Sundays tell your family they used too much water during the week, so no bathing will be allowed.
11. Raise your bed to within 6 inches of the ceiling, so you can't turn over without getting out and then getting back in.
12. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about 3 hours after you go to sleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say, "Sorry, wrong rack."
13. Make your family qualify to operate each appliance in your house-dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.
14. Have you neighbor come over each day at 5 am, blow a whistle so loud Helen Keller could hear it, and shout, "Reveille!"
15. Have your mother-in-law write down everything she's going to do the following day, then have her make you stand in your backyard at 6 am while she reads it to you.
16. Submit a request chit to your father-in-law requesting permission to leave your house before 3 pm.
17. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep the driveway three times a day, whether it needs it or not.
18. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item before delivering it to you.
19. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night. Have your family vote on which movie to watch, then show a different one.
20. When your children are in bed, run into their room with a megaphone shouting that your home is under attack and ordering them to their battle stations.
21. Make your family menu ahead of time without consulting the pantry or refrigerator.
22. Post a menu on the kitchen door informing your family that they are having steak for dinner. Then make them wait in line for an hour. When they finally get to the kitchen, tell them you are out of steak, but they can have dried ham or hot dogs. Repeat daily until they ignore the menu and just ask for hot dogs.
23. Bake a cake. Prop up one side of the pan so the cake bakes unevenly. Spread icing real thick to level it off.
24. Get up every night around midnight and have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on stale bread.
25. Set your alarm clock to go off at random during the night. At the alarm, jump up and dress as fast as you can, making sure to button your top shirt button and tuck your pants into your socks. Run out into the backyard and uncoil the garden hose.
26. Every week or so, throw your cat or dog in the pool and shout, "Man overboard port side!" Rate your family members on how fast they respond.
27. Put the headphones from your stereo on your head, but don't plug them in. Hang an paper cup around your neck on a string. Stand in front of the stove, and speak into the paper cup, "Stove manned and ready." After an hour or so, speak into the cup again, "Stove secured." Roll up the headphones and paper cup and stow them in a shoebox.
28. Place a podium at the end of your driveway. Have your family stand watches at the podium, rotating at 4 hour intervals. This is best done when the weather is worst. January is a good time.
29. When there is a thunderstorm in your area, get a wobbly rocking chair, sit in it and rock as hard as you can until you become nauseous. Make sure to have a supply of stale crackers in your shirt pocket.
30. For former engineers: bring your lawn mower into the living room, and run it all day long.
31. Make coffee using eighteen scoops of budget priced coffee grounds per pot, and allow the pot to simmer for 5 hours before drinking.
32. Have someone under the age of ten give you a haircut with sheep shears.
33. Sew the back pockets of your jeans on the front.
34. Every couple of weeks, dress up in your best clothes and go to the scummiest part of town. Find the most run down, trashiest bar, and drink beer until you are hammered. Then walk all the way home.
35. Lock yourself and your family in the house for six weeks. Tell them that at the end of the 6th week you are going to take them to Disney World for "liberty." At the end of the 6th week, inform them the trip to Disney World has been canceled because they need to get ready for inspection, and it will be another week before they can leave the house.

PICTURES SUBMITTED BY MIKE STEINBERG



(LR) Bob Young, SA, 1st Div, AR; J.A. Flanagan, SA, 1st Div, AR (deceased); Joe Batista, SN O Div, Los Angeles; Fred Carter, GM2, G Div; Levi Garret, BM2, 1st Div; Stable or Stabel, GM3, G Div

This picture was taken in about late 1955 in the ship's bar, at Sasebo, Japan.



(LR) Ray Sutton and Mike Steinberg. Taken in probably 1956 in the old Army terminal on our way back to Treasure Island.

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

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A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR FORMER USS YANCEY SAILORS

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