

# YANCEY MEMORIES

Volume 6, Issue 4

November 2002

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS YANCEY AKKA-93



### Special Points of Interest

- Read all about the 2002 reunion in Charleston in our cover story. You missed a good one if you weren't there.
- If you want to see who attended the reunion, turn to page two for a list.
- Coordinator George Clifton has a welcoming article on page two.
- WELCOME MAT on page three has 12 newly located shipmates.
- MAIL CALL begins on page three and has some *great* stories! Remember Bosun L?
- The History of the USS Yancey continues on page six.

## 2002 CHARLESTON REUNION —GREAT

Twenty-nine former sailors of the USS Yancey and twenty-two of their guests had a fabulous time in the charming city of Charleston, SC during the November 7-10 reunion. The Radisson North Charleston was the host facility for the seventh reunion of the group. We just wish everyone could have been there to join in the fun and fellowship.

Shipmates and guests began arriving on Thursday for registration which started at noon. The hospitality room also opened at that time and gave the reunion goers a place to

visit after getting settled into their rooms. At 5:00 P.M. a reception was held to welcome all to the reunion and to introduce the new arrivals to one another. The evening was free to have dinner with old friends and newly acquainted arrivals. The hospitality room became a popular meeting area to discuss lives and reminisce about the days gone by.

The Charleston Day tour left at 9:00 A.M. on Friday for those choosing to participate. The fully narrated riding tour of Charleston took the group by the lovely

homes along the Battery, Rainbow Row, magnificent public buildings and churches and other points of interest. A favorite stop, especially for the ladies, was the Market in the downtown area. Many took advantage of the multitude of jewelry, crafts and souvenirs available there. After lunch it was off to Boone Hall Plantation for a tour of the house and grounds of the beautiful old home used in the movie North and South. After returning to the hotel in the afternoon and having time for a short rest, the social

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hour began at 6:00 P.M. Dinner at 7:00 was served in the atrium of the hotel, which was a perfect setting for the Plantation buffet. Dinner was followed by entertainment by Bonnie Earle. Ms. Earle is an "Artist in Residence" in SC and entertains with Low Country music and legends. Her music was enjoyed by all.

Saturday was a big day! A visit to Patriot's Point was the highlight of the reunion for many of the "old" sailors. They saw the Aircraft Carrier Yorktown, the famous fighting lady of WWII; the destroyer Laffey; the submarine Clamagore; and the Coast Guard Cutter Ingham. Lunch was aboard the Yorktown in the CPO Mess. After lunch the group was taken aboard the General Beauregard out to Fort Sumter where rangers from the Park Service gave information about the famous bastion and its museum. During the 20-minute cruise to the fort, Charleston's harbor and the battery were in view, while "thousands!" of sea gulls came along for the ride, begging for a handout.

The business meeting was held when the tour returned to the hotel in the afternoon. Suggestions for the site for the 2004 reunion were discussed. San Francisco, CA or Long Beach, CA were the two localities which will be voted on at the 2003 reunion in Corpus Christi, TX. George Clifton will be the coordinator of the group for the next year.

The festivities for the Saturday night banquet began with a pre-dinner cocktail hour and photo session for the Sentimental Journal, a post reunion book which will be for sale later in the year. Dressed in their finest, everyone looked "ship-shape" for the more formal setting of the banquet. Following the dinner, the group was delighted by a film of the USS Yancey brought in by Chief Groom. Also after dinner was the memorial service held in remembrance of all shipmates who had died or whose deaths were learned of since the last reunion. The night ended with lots of stories being told and many friendships being made

and renewed.

Sunday morning brought the reunion to an official ending, as those still remaining enjoyed one last meal together before heading back to their homes and present day lives. The reunion was over, but its memory will live on in the hearts and minds of all who attended. We hope you will be able to join everyone next year in Corpus Christi, TX. Make an effort to attend. You won't regret it!

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Balance remaining after 07/02 issue  
**\$415.03**

Funds received since 07/02 issue  
**\$40.00**

Funds available for 11/02 issue  
**\$455.03**

Funds expended for 11/02 issue  
**\$231.40**

Remaining balance  
**\$223.63**

**A NEWSLETTER EXCLUSIVELY FOR FORMER USS YANCEY SAILORS**

*Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc*  
PO Drawer 11399  
Hickory, NC 28603  
828-256-6008 (voice)  
828-256-6559 (Fax)  
Dinamlrs@aol.com (e-mail)  
mlrsnewsletters@aol.com (Newsletter e-mail)  
**www.mlrsinc.com**  
"Our Reunions Work So You don't Have To"

**2002 REUNION ATTENDEES**

- Norman & Connie Boyd
- Richey Brunskill
- Kenneth & Connie Chester
- Richard & Jackie Chester
- David & Blanche Chestnut
- George Clifton
- Robert & Pat Dinwiddle
- James & Verna Ford
- Jerry & Carol Goforth
- Kenneth Groom
- Ulysis & Jean Harmon
- Johnnie & Fay Johnson
- Duane & Betty Malme
- Fred & Florence Matherne
- Douglas Mayo
- Clifford McCune
- Rufus Meadows & Lydia Gracia
- Joel & Marjorie Newman
- Harold & Jo Donna O'Leary
- Michael & Ginny O'Leary
- Grady Pentecost & Tony Purmort
- Delbert & Doris Perry
- Henry & Marilyn Pohlmann
- Philip & Mary Sara
- Lawrence & Helen Tedesco
- Ernest & Mary Ann Todd
- James Way
- Ray & Mary Wilson
- James Young

**Total Members: 29**

**Guests: 22**

**GRAND TOTAL: 51**

**WELCOME ABOARD FROM GEORGE CLIFTON**

I want to welcome all shipmates aboard that I was able to track down and hope you enjoyed the reunion in Charleston if you are one who made it there. I also want to encourage anyone who hasn't made it to one of the reunions to make an effort to attend the next one in Corpus Christi. Since our first reunion in Norfolk in 1995, I have only missed one and I hope to never miss one again. I know people are sometimes

hesitant because they aren't sure someone they were aboard with will be there. I can understand that because I felt the same way. But I can tell you that the shipmates at these reunions (and their wives) are a great group and make everyone feel welcome and we have a great time. After all, we do all have something in common—the Yancey.

George Clifton

## 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 ML & RS, Inc so their names can be included in TAPS and be added to the Honor Roll.

*Ralph Wayne Hovey  
Died July 16, 2002*

*Stan A. Mallory  
Date of death not known*



## 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.

*Charles Williams (1955) GM3  
207 Brown Rd  
Simpsonville, SC 29681*

*Leland "Pipe" Piper  
(1953-55) BM1/c 1st Deck  
P.O. Box 1325  
Breaux Bridge, LA 70517  
337-332-2033*

*John Mewis SM1  
8460 Hope Ct  
Thornton, CO 80631  
303-288-0422  
iamajsmom@aol.com*

*Bruce Proctor (Recomm-1964)  
729 Omak Cir  
Las Vegas, NV 89107  
702-870-7972  
br1@sprintmail.com*

*Lewis Daniels (1965) FN A Gang  
313 Keeling St  
Veedersburg, IN 47987  
765-294-4595*

*Jadie Ates (1964-67)  
1515 Cunningham Rd  
Columbia, MO 65203  
573-445-3910  
jn83@msn.com*

*Charles Tarpley  
1 East View Cir  
Greensboro, GA 30642*

*Douglas Mayo (1964-67) Boat Div  
6445 A S Florida  
Lakeland, FL 33813  
813-967-4083*

*James "Sparkie" Sparkman  
(1951-52) EM3/c E Div  
1773 CR 2700  
Mineola, TX 75773-4921  
903-569-9225  
jhdslr@lci.net*

*YNC (AW) Eugene Watson USN(Ret)  
(1965-66) YN2  
watsonpateugene@aol.com*

*Thomas Constantinovich (1951) HN  
6480 Millcreek Rd  
Youngstown, OH 44512  
330-758-3844*

*Stephen Mann  
3457 Idlewild Rd  
Burlington, KY 41005  
859-586-6491*

## NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

The Yancey Memories will resume its regular schedule in January of 2003. The newsletter was one month off schedule this time because we wanted to wait until the reunion was over so all the information from it could be published in the fall edition.



## MAIL CALL

Yancey Story:

In the last issue, Jim Way, in recounting his story of his liberty party returning to the ship in the "M" boat and the sailors throwing the hats overboard, reminded me of a liberty party returning on the "M" boat in Sasebo.

When the Yancey was doing a 6 months tour on station in Sasebo in '52-'53, I was one of the duty LCM coxswains. I considered that was the best job I had while in the Navy. Among other things, being a coxswain of an "M" boat gave one a feeling of superiority, especially when using it as liberty launch.

Most of the other ships in the harbor at Sasebo were ships of the line and, of course, their launches were the low gunnels variety. As you remember, during this time frame, we didn't have overnight liberty and the last liberty party pick up was at 2330. This meant that Fleet Landing was a large jockeying mass of boats trying to reach the landing floats at the same time. This is where the advantage of having an LCM as a liberty boat pays off. Being the largest boat there and having twin engines for maneuverability, plus the fact that the "M" boat's exhausts were at about the same level as the gunnels on the other launches, assured that everyone got out of the way when they saw the boat coming. Diesel exhaust on dress whites does not go together.

Anyway, being the last liberty run on this particular night, the boat was nearly full in the well deck and the deck around the coxswain's station was loaded with chiefs and officers. Of course, regulations required that all passengers be in the well deck while

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underway. You can imagine how easy it was encouraging chiefs and officers who were feeling no pain to join a well deck full of highly inebriated sailors!

It was a particularly dark night, overcast and rainy. And as those of you who were there at the time remember there was a small island in the middle of the harbor with a blinking light. Near the island on the port side outbound there was a mooring buoy. The tide was coming in at a good clip, which was probably fortunate because the buoy was slanted toward the oncoming boat. Not seeing the buoy while watching the island led to a glancing blow off the buoy with the boat. This took care of the standing passengers on the top deck of the boat. Most, if not all, ended up in the well deck. Fortunately, no one was injured and no one fell overboard.

This quieted all the ruckus on board. Surprisingly, I never heard any complaints.

Does anyone remember the night?

David Chestnut

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Hello Shipmates,

Ever wonder why the eagle on your Crow/Devices faces front? For many years the Navy specified modified forms of the Napoleonic Eagle in the devices and insignia used to distinguish the various ranks and ratings of enlisted men and officers. This eagle was usually cast, stamped or embroidered facing left. Why the Napoleonic eagle faced left is unknown. In 1941 the Navy changed the eagles to follow the heraldic rules, facing right toward the wearer's sword arm. This rule continues to apply, and the eagle now faces the front or the wearer's right.

To the bitter end? The Bitter End is a turn of a line around a bitt, those wooden or iron posts sticking through a ship's deck, is called a bitter. Thus, the last of the line secured to the bitts is known as the bitter end. Nautical

usage has somewhat expanded the original definition so that today, the end of any line, secured to bitts or not, is called a bitter end. The land-lubbing phrases "stick to the bitter end" and "faithful to the bitter end" are derivations of this term, and refer to anyone who insists on adhering to a course of action without regard to consequences.

Ever wonder where the term "Bridge" came from? As ships passed to steam and orders could be given by remote methods such as the engine-order telegraph, a small control deck with an enclosed pilot house was constructed above the main deck of the ship in front of the funnel, usually reaching from side to side and thus 'bridging' the main deck. It became the term used to describe the place where the Captain steered the ship from and gave his orders.

Ever wonder how the Quarter-deck got its name? In very early English ships, a small religious shrine was set up there, and every man going by would take off his hat in respect or salute it as he passed. This was the origin for saluting the Quarter-deck which still persists today. It also became the place where the men were gathered to muster and receive orders from the officers up on the raised (or "poop") deck in the stern area. This was also the origin of the "Watch, Quarter, and Station Bill," and also the origin of "Beat to Quarters," when drums were used to summon the crew to battle stations.

Bluejacket's Manual celebrates its 100th year! Students in training at the Great Lakes Service School Command's Seamanship Training Division became part of Naval history as they observed the 100th anniversary of the Navy's Bluejacket's Manual. The first Bluejacket's Manual was printed in 1902 and authored by Lieutenant Ridley McLean. By World War I, the Bluejacket's Manual was issued to every recruit in boot camp, a tradition that has continued to this day. I still have my Boot Camp copy.

Do you? (By; Greg Peterman USN Retired)

*If you did not keep yours and if you would like to buy a copy it is available from Amazon.com. Type in Bluejackets Manual in the search area and you should find listed several different editions and some in hardcover. I bought a used copy so that on my bookshelf it would look like I had saved mine from boot camp. Actually I did not get a copy when I was in boot camp so I will study my manual and see if I knew what I was doing when I was in the Navy.*

Ever dropped a tool in a bilge and had to retrieve it? "Bilge" is Old English in origin, and is a variation on "bulge." Where the ship bulged most was at its bottom, where sea water seeped in and became stagnant and foul, mixing with dripping water and 'slops' from the upper decks. Pumping out the bilges was a smelly, very disagreeable chore, and the term thus became used to describe anything unpleasant or unbelievable.

Port or starboard? Ever wonder where those terms come from? Before the rudder was invented, sailing ships were guided by a large oar or "steering board" set towards the stern of the ship, usually on the right side. To avoid damage from the dock or pier, the ship was tied up on its left side while the ship was in port. Thus the left side of the ship became the "port" side, and the right the "star board." This soon became known as the "starboard" and designated the right-hand side of the ship.

When in port, the vessel would tie up on its left side, away from the steering oar, thus becoming known as the "port" side.

*Submitted by George Rohrman*

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### **THE IDENTITY OF BOSUN "L"**

I wrote the story titled "Looking for 'L' in All the Wrong Places" a year ago in the January issue. I did

*(Continued from page 4)*

not identify Bosun L, and will not, but I would like to point out some of his characteristics. I am sure there are shipmates that remember more details than I remember as well as what I have been told.

I think the best way to describe him is that he was sort of like Jack Nicholson, the actor, in the movie "The Last Detail." You know, he had a permanent devilish grin. He always wore tailor made dungarees with a wide leather belt. He had a tanned and leathery appearance and also wore a tailor made dress uniform. On his slim hips he had his favorite Bosun knife strapped to his side.

One of his famous reveille calls he liked to use when he had the 4:00 am to 8:00 am quarter deck watch is shown below. He could pipe the "all hands" with his Bosun pipe with a sound so sweet that I can remember it today. His own words after piping were:

"Wakie, wakie rise and shine  
you have had yours and I've had mine.

The cooks are in the Galley burning the stew  
So heave out, leap out, lash up and turn to.

Sweepers man your brooms, clean sweep down to and froe  
Get the corners as you go.

I purposely left out one line so as not to offend anyone. Also I probably have the sequence of the lines mixed up, but that is the best I can remember after a half of a century. Maybe some of my shipmates can fill some lines in for me.

I am told by others that they have counted up to 25 tattos on Bosun "L" and I can verify some. They include:

"True Love" on fingers  
ships screws on lower cheeks  
babes on forearm  
lip print on a 'special spot'  
the words "sweet & sour"  
blue birds

battleship on chest

I remember he liked to show his expertise with a knife and also his 'sidearm' (45 cal. pistol) when he was on duty. I was told the clever (or is it cleaver) manipulation of the knife was accidentally found its way into someone's leg. Also, he tried to imitate a western movie in the Galley when the 45 went off while he was twirling it on his finger. The shell did some bouncing around in the galley before hitting the overhead and glancing off of the large copper kettles before it came to rest.

He knew his seamanship and could do all of the special rope work such as "Turk's" head, monkey fist and the special braiding that was used on the railing around the quarterdeck. He had wore the same rank several times up and down the pay scale.

Can some shipmate add to the above description? Let's hear from you.

### BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME

I will have to disguise the identity of this individual to protect the innocent. I will call him Gunner E. Gunner E came on board the Yancey about the same time I did. He was a very likable sailor and made friends easily. I would describe him as thrifty and sharing with others. Thrifty? Well, he was the kind of guy that probably bought irregular underwear—but you can't fault him for that. He did have some characteristics that separated him from the run of the mill. For example, during abandon ship drill, at sea, he could sleep standing up staying in tune with the roll and pitch of the ship. At the time I could not identify the reason for this unusual physical attribute—but in the passing years I determined by unshakable evidence that his center of gravity was somewhere near his knees.

Another trait of his was that he was quite often without funds to enjoy his liberty. He soon discovered a system of leverage where he would pop his head into our office door and say, "Hey, could you chunk a quarter

on me for liberty?" How could you refuse when only 25 cents prevented him from going on liberty. Later, I realized that there were something like 200 sailors aboard and if he only contacted half of them, he was \$25 ahead. I did say he was thrifty.

### SHIP'S LAUNDRY FACILITIES

Recently I was surfing the web and came across this item. Several ex-sailors were polled about the type of laundry facilities they had on their ships. They fell into the following categories:

1. Dirty laundry is thrown in a community bin, the ship servicemen pick it up, it comes back and people on duty sort it and put it on each individual's bunk. The Yancey was similar to this, but we sorted our own as I remember it. My second ship, a carrier, followed the above method.
2. Restricted washing: Clothes washed in salt water and rinsed with fresh water.
3. Washing with salt water only, folded wrong side out causing the clothes to stick.
4. All clothes thrown in a big net, tied to a line and thrown over the side and towed for a given time. In event the line breaks, you wear shorts for 3 days and then turn the shorts wrong side out for another 3 days. Didn't say what you did on the 7th day—maybe stayed in your bunk.

All the above material was sent in by:

Ken Groom—Yancey Historian  
2505 South 250th Place  
Kent, WA 98032  
206-824-4708  
kdg345@aol.com

# USS YANCEY HISTORY

*Continued from last issues*

Yancey entered Tokyo Bay on the morning of 2 September, the day Japan signed the formal articles of surrender on the deck of the battleship Missouri (RB-63), anchored there. Shortly after the conclusion of those ceremonies, the attack cargo ship headed into Yokohama harbor, the third ship in her squadron to enter that port and the first to start unloading. The ship completed her unloading in 19 hours and then proceeded to an anchorage off Yokohama.

TransRon 16 proceeded to sea on 4 September and steamed via Leyte Gulf to Zamboanga. There, they commenced loading elements of the Army's 41st Infantry Division on the 18th. Completing that process on the 18th, Yancey and her sisters shifted soon thereafter to Bugo, Mindanao, where she picked up Army LCM's. Ultimately, TG 54.28, of which Yancey was a part, assembled in Leyte Gulf on the 21st. The following day, all ships weighed anchor and headed for the Inland Sea of Japan.

Due to minesweeping difficulties, however, the landings scheduled for the Kure-Hiroshima area were postponed; and the task group sailed instead for Buckner Bay, Okinawa. On 23 September, the ship put to sea to evade a typhoon. On 1 October, she returned and anchored in Buckner Bay. Two days later, Yancey again headed for Japanese waters and entered Bungo Suido on the 5th, beginning the long, difficult passage up the Inland Sea along the channel swept through the mine-fields. The next morning—after spending the night anchored in the cleared channel—Yancey headed for Hiro Wan, where the landings were made.

The ship completed her unloading in 48 hours. On 9 October, she detached from TransRon 16 and reported to CinCPac for

assignment. The following day, Yancey rode out a typhoon with 130 fathoms of chain on deck, a second anchor ready to go, and steam at the throttle. On the 11th, the rest of her squadron hoisted "homeward bound" pennants and headed for home, leaving Yancey to celebrate the first anniversary of her commissioning anchored in Hiro Wan, Japan, "waiting orders."

On 15 October, Yancey got underway for the Philippines. She drew replacement boats at Subic Bay and stopped at Manila for logistics before she sailed for French Indochina. En route to Haiphong, the ship's force readied the attack cargo vessel to receive her next passengers, Chinese troops.

Assigned to Task Unit (TU) 78.6.7, Yancey reached Dason, French Indochina, on 2 November. However, embarkation of the men of the 471st Regiment, 62nd Chinese Army, did not begin for 11 days. The delay permitted both officers and men from Yancey to see the local sites ashore. On the 13th, Yancey brought on board by boat 1,027 officers and men and one interpreter. The next day, the task unit-three attack transports (APA's) and Yancey stood out for Takao, Formosa.

The trip, as recorded by Yancey commanders, was uneventful, except for rough weather which caused the Chinese to suffer numerous cases of seasickness. Regular Chinese Army rations-tea and rice-were served twice a day, augmented by that staple, the "C" ration. North of Takao, on the 18th, TU 78.6.7 dropped anchor. By 1700 that day, the disembarking was complete. The Chinese had cooperated fully during the trip, and one Yancey sailor observed that they seemed "most appreciative of what little could be done to make them comfortable."

The following day, 18 November, Yancey proceeded to Manila to await further orders. On 25 November exactly one year after the ship had left

the United States and headed for the war zone—the attack cargo ship received her orders to proceed to the east coast of the United States for duty with the Service Force, Atlantic Fleet. The ship's captain, Comdr. Rice, had the orders read over the ship's public address system. As a Yancey sailor recorded, "the response left no doubt that all hands were satisfied."

After embarking a capacity load of Army and Navy men returning to the United States for discharge, Yancey left Manila harbor on 27 November. Streaming a homeward-bound pennant 310 feet long and adorned with 27 stars, Yancey headed for home.

Reaching Balboa, Panama Canal Zone, on the last day of the year—via Pearl Harbor (where the ship fueled and received boiler repairs) and with Navy passengers embarked (the Army had been put ashore at Pearl Harbor)—Yancey was the last ship to transit the Panama Canal in 1945.

Six days into the new year, 1946, Yancey cleared Cristobal, Canal Zone, bound for Louisiana. After a brief stop at New Orleans, the attack cargo ship proceeded on, via Jacksonville, Fla., to Norfolk, where she arrived on 29 January. Less than a month later, on 27 February, Yancey sailed farther north and reached the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard the following day.

Over the next few months, Yancey underwent a regular overhaul there and then operated off the eastern seaboard and into the western Atlantic. During that time, she called at Bayonne, N.J.; Bermuda; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Balboa, Canal Zone; Jacksonville, Fla; and made return calls at Norfolk, Bayonne, and Bermuda. In addition, the ship visited the New York Naval Shipyard and Davisville, R.I., before being assigned tentatively to TF 68 effective on 9 November.

*To be continued next issue.*