

GRIGGS-GRUNDY NEWS

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

MARCH 2002

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS GRIGGS AND GRUNDY



Special Points of Interest

- Read co-chairman John Forshee's report on the reunion in New Orleans in the cover story. Hope you can be at the next reunion in Charleston.
- WELCOME MAT on page two has two newly located shipmates. TAPS honors three who have passed away.
- MAIL CALL on page three has Duke Mihalyi's memories from his days on the Grundy. See if any of them sound familiar to you.
- Page four of MAIL CALL has other memories of Capt. Cabanillas and an article on four brothers who have long time marriages.
- You won't want to miss "What is a Vet?" on page five.

CO-CHAIRMAN REVIEWS REUNION

Hello Shipmates:

Well, we had our reunion in New Orleans and we believe all those that attended had a good time doing all the tours etc. that took place. Also feel sure that everyone was glad to see each other again after a full year. We had two new couples this time that had never been to one of our reunions, one for the Griggs and one from the Grundy. From the Griggs was Wilburn Roberts and wife Christine (Chris), from the Grundy was Frank Galloway and wife Dianne. We are very sorry that there was sickness in some of our mates that kept us from having their company this time. There was also problems with transportation for some of the shipmates due to the disaster at the World

Trade Center and at the Pentagon. Lots of flights were not available for those flying and we had some flight cancellations for return flights home after the reunion. At the reunion it was decided to increase yearly dues for the reunions to \$15.00 so the bulletins would be sufficiently financed to come out quarterly. Out of a total of five different locations for next year's reunion it was decided to have it in Charleston, South Carolina. Hopefully there will not be any thing to interfere this next year.

We had the opportunity to tour the D-Day Memorial in New Orleans and it was an impressive exhibit that everyone seemed to enjoy. Took the swamp tour and saw some hungry alligators

and resisted the urge to feed them. The boat driver was of Cajun descent and knew his way around in the swamp. He hunted alligators when the season is open, operated a shrimp boat and fishing boat to make a living besides his tour business. Our tour guide was a local girl, also a Cajun, and really knew the area well and gave a fine tour of the old plantation house and garden. We had lunch at the plantation and it was very good but spicy (hot). Please send us your e-mail address if you have one and we don't have one for you. It would be much cheaper on the shipmates to send e-mail than by the post office system.

Sincerely,
Charles Forshee

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The GRIGGS-GRUNDY NEWS is the official publication of the USS GRIGGS-GRUNDY Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in March, June, Sept., and Dec. *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 NEWS. 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.

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

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

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"Our Reunions Work, So You Don't Have To"



TAPS

The deaths of the following shipmates have been learned of since the last newsletter. The entire crew extends our sympathy to families and friends. If anyone knows of a deceased shipmate please inform the NEWS so he can be recognized in TAPS and also be listed on the honor roll at the reunion memorial service.

*Edward S. Kazmierczak
(USS Griggs)
Died June 1, 2001*

*Lonnie Ray Davis
(USS Grundy)
Died January 19, 2002*

*Walter Snyder
(USS Grundy)
Died February 12, 2001*



WELCOME MAT

The USS GRIGGS-GRUNDY family welcomes the most recently located shipmates. We hope to see you at the next reunion and ask you to take an active part in our Association.

*Charles Richard "Duke" Mihalyi
(USS GRUNDY)
7518 State St. Box 166
Lowville, NY 13367
315-376-2547*

*Marshall Raley
mr1@ipa.net*

**2002 REUNION
OCTOBER 10-13
CHARLESTON, SC**

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 12/01 issue
Minus \$22.88

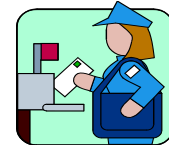
Funds received since 12/01 issue
\$255.00

Funds available for 03/02 issue
\$232.12

Funds expended for 03/02 issue
\$134.15

Ending Balance \$97.97

Funds will be needed for the next issue.



MAIL CALL

The following are portions of letters that were forwarded to ML&RS by Daniel Brown, coordinator of the Griggs/Grundy association.

Dear Daniel,

Our card is late for two reasons. First we had a death in the family close to Christmas. Secondly, I wanted to send you a copy of a report of the death of Al Renz who was a lieutenant on the Grundy. I had mislaid it and just found it the other day.

Incidentally, the article was in a Long Island, NY newspaper and was sent to me by Frank Maieski who lives on the Island and is the only shipmate from the Grundy that I have stayed in touch with.

We usually plan to go somewhere around Oct. This year we went to Cape Cod and plan to go there again next fall. It is close and we have friends there. However, if there is a reunion and it is located fairly close, we may be able to do both. So far none of the attendees noted are known by me.

I was in charge of the I.C. room group of electricians in the "E" Div. Had charge of all Interior Communi-

cations and I was also the qualified Gyro-compass technician on board. Perhaps someone was familiar with our group.

Will look forward to the next publication of the newsletter. Hope to keep in touch. We wish you both the very best.

Sincerely,
John Carlson

P.S. The death of Lt. Renz was noted in one of the newsletters, but details were unknown. The date is not listed, but research into the date of the accident should be easy.

This is the newspaper article referred to in the letter above:

Allan and Catherine Renz, Ala. Train Wreck Victims

Catherine Renz was afraid to fly.

So when Renz, 69, and her husband, Allan, 71, former Long Islanders, went to visit their daughter in California each summer, they always took the train from their retirement home in Bradenton, FL.

The Renzes were aboard Amtrak's Sunset Limited when it derailed and crashed early Wednesday near Mobile, AL. Both were killed.

"My mother refused to fly," said the couple's son, Allan, Jr. of Mineola. "She was petrified of heights. She thought trains were safer."

Allan Renz and Catherine Collin were born in Brooklyn and lived in Bay Ridge. They met in high school and married June 6, 1944, while Mr. Renz, a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, was in the Navy. He served in the Atlantic and the Pacific during World War II, his son said.

After the war, the Renzes lived in Brooklyn. Allan Renz, a mechanical engineer, joined Gibbs & Hill, a Manhattan engineering consulting firm, for which he worked until his retirement in 1986. Catherine Renz worked for the tele-

phone company for a short time.

In 1955, the Renzes moved to Seaford, where they lived for 33 years before retiring to Florida. In Seaford, they were active in the St. William and Abbot parish and, after moving to Florida, Mrs. Renz devoted much of her time to Our Daily Bread, a homeless shelter in Bradenton.

Besides their son, survivors include a daughter, Kathryn Renz, of Pacifica, CA, and four grandchildren. In addition, Mrs. Renz is survived by three sisters, Marie Connors, of Bradenton, Helen Connors, of Plandome, and Rita McDermott, of Virginia. Mr. Renz is survived by one sister, Audrey Hutter, of Stuart, FL.

A funeral service will be Oct. 9 at Sts. Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church in Bradenton. Their ashes will be spread at a memorial garden at the church.

The family asks that donations be made to Our Daily Bread in Bradenton.

Dear Claire & Daniel,

After reading your newsletter, it has dawned on me the reason I never hear exactly when the Reunion will be—I haven't been sending my dues. So I am enclosing my check for \$15.00 and if you would see that it gets in the right hands—I feel sure that I will be able to make it to Charleston. Just need to get the info.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Brackin

Hi Dan,

Received all the information, post marked 12/4/01 and was pleased to be able to look over things that happened while I was aboard.

When I finished at Sampson, I went directly to Newport, RI to start the work to commission the ship. I worked in the office trying for yeoman. However, a Lt. Browder liked me so much, that just before we went to Miss. to the ship, he had me transferred to his Deck Division. Man was I angry.

Aboard ship I was the body guard for Capt. Cabanillas for 3 months. Got to know him very well. Stayed on the

deck force but offered to go on any work detail thus it wasn't too long when I had all the easy jobs. Didn't stand a watch well into the Pacific Ocean and then it was emergency steering below deck at the fan tail. After that I went to the wheel house and took over the steering of the ship. I enjoyed this and the Captain knew me immediately.

When we went to Guam with the Marines, I remember that someone had hit a valve draining the fluid so that there was no steering and boy was the captain angry! They had to go aft to emergency until they found the problem. I then took over until we got really close and a Quartermaster took command.

I sure remember going to Hawaii and then to San Diego. We then went to Seattle or that little town for dry dock. That was where I got hurt trying to shackle a cable to the deck and was hit in the face, and transferred to the base hospital. Stayed in the hospital for 2 weeks and was given a 2 week medical leave. Came home to Glenfield, my hometown that is 7 miles north of Lowville, NY.

I went back to Bremerton and found I was being transferred to another ship, but told them that 80% of my gear was still aboard the Grundy, which was headed for San Francisco. So I boarded a cattle train for Frisco. When I got there, the ship was not due in Frisco and there was a change in orders.

I worked at the Realway Express helping sailors who were being discharged until I noticed that I was to be transferred to Goat Island which was nearby. I didn't have any chores to do to keep me sane, so I bowled ten pins a lot against a buddy from Chicago. Had a 702 against him and he had 688. He told me that he bowled 5 nights a week and carried a 218 average. I told him that I was just lucky with my 702 since I only bowled in a league once a week with a 180 average.

Then I noticed that there were 4 fellows from the Grundy who were being transferred, so I went down

to the main island and waited around. Finally a yeoman came and said we finally found your file in the DEAD file. Boy that was great! I might have been there to this day and NOT receiving any pay as my records were still aboard the ship. I got the transfer and went with the 4 guys to Portland where the Grundy anchored. I stayed ashore for 5 days and had a ball, but had to phone my dad for money. I only had \$4.00 to my name.

I boarded the ship I think Christmas Day, and you guys already had your Christmas dinner. I had sandwiches, etc. Lt. Browder was then Captain of the ship and was very happy to see me. It was then that he gave me 3rd class Store keeper, but gave me FREE liberty while in port. I then moved to the foc'sle where we started boxing supplies to be removed as the ship was to be decommissioned.

I could go on and on. A buddy of mine is Dale Green, 517 Tharp RD L.C., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404-9039. He was the guy that gave me your name, etc. about the Grundy.

Keep me posted and I may join and send dues.

Regards,
Duke
(C Richard Mihalyi)

P.S. Haven't used Charles R. Mihalyi in years. My nickname is Duke. People in 3 counties know me by that.

Dear Dan,

Having had the greatest respect and admiration for Captain Cabanillas, I was delighted and grateful to see the account of his life after leaving the USS Grundy, submitted by his son.

At the commissioning of the Grundy in Pascagoula, our senior medical officer had not yet arrived, at a time Captain Cabanillas was being tormented by a painful health problem. Although there was a junior medical officer aboard, the Captain summoned me—the Beach Party Medical Officer attached to the Grundy, not ship's company—

to relieve him of this problem which, fortunately, I was able to do.

A few days later, Lt. Cmdr. John Murphy, our Senior Medical Officer, came aboard. Commander Murphy happened to have been a primary care physician in my native Wheeling, West Virginia, and was a close friend of my father's who also was a physician, a veteran of World War II! After coming to the Captain's aid, and meeting my father's close friend, I began to think the war was going well for me, as a beach party medical officer!

From that beginning with the Grundy, until I received orders to leave her just after V-J Day at Eniwetok, I always had a good feeling that I would not be a victim of some screw-up in our organization, which I owed to Captain Cabanillas and Doctor Murphy.

I was hastily brought back to the States to the Marine Barracks at Bainbridge, Maryland, with others of my situation, to examine troops, physically, prior to their discharge from service.

My best wishes to you, Dan. I'm seriously looking to Charleston in October.

Bill Gilmore
2603 Eagle Ct
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Dear Claire,

So good to hear from you about the reunion in New Orleans. Virg and I really wanted to go this year as we have been through New Orleans but have never spent time there. It sounds like you had a great time.

Butch's father called Milton last week and filled him in on the details. They had a good time too.

Charleston sounds like a good choice. Certainly hope to make it.

Virg and I have had a good year. In May we spent a week in New Zealand and a week in Australia. Then in July we celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. We had a dinner-dance for 225 people. Our nieces and nephews came from 8 different states and my brother came up from Florida. We had such

a great time and felt truly blessed with all the family support.

I am enclosing an article that was in our local paper. Thought you would enjoy it.

Love,
Betty Roecker

The following is the article mentioned above:

GENOA'S FOUR ROECKER BROTHERS MARRIED FOR LIFE

By Rick Waldron, Press Staff Writer

Guests at weddings have come to expect certain dances. Usually frivolous, but obligatory nonetheless, like the Hokey-Pokey or the Chicken dance. Recent years have seen a more serious, often poignant addition to the deejays' program. It doesn't have a name per se, most people call it the Anniversary dance. All married couples are invited to begin dancing. The deejay proceeds to eliminate couples by the length of their marriage. Married 20 years or less, please sit. Then 25, and 30, and 35 until the longest married couple present is dancing alone.

Earlier this year, an interesting coincidence occurred during an Anniversary dance. After several eliminations, four couples were still dancing. To almost everyone's amazement, they were four brothers, all born in Genoa, all graduates of Genoa High School, and married for 57, 55, 50, and 49 years respectively.

The long-married brothers are Wilson, Milton, Virgil, and Bob Roecker. The four sons of John and Ida Roecker. The brothers and their four deceased sisters grew up on the family homestead on Camper Road, just south of the lime plant. Poor health kept John and Ida from establishing a lengthy marriage. John worked the 40 acre family farm and worked at the lime plant. Marrying at 30, he died of kidney disease at 64. But in those years he and Ida imparted some strong values. Betty is Virgil's wife. She said, "John and Ida gave the boys some great stability. The family is very close-knit. They all had good religious training (all are Lutheran) and a solid

work ethic.”

Wilson and his wife, Genevieve are 78 and married in November, 1943. They have four children, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. He worked at Pure Oil and for the George Ackerman Company in Curtice.

Milton and Hilda are 76, marrying in June, 1946. They have three children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. Milton retired from Local 50 after many years as a pipefitter.

Virgil, 71 and Betty, 68 were married in July, 1951. They have three children, two survive. They have three grandchildren. Virgil retired after 30 years at AP Parts. Betty shared her husband's longevity on the job, working at USCO in Port Clinton for 26 years.

Bob, 69 and Betty, 69 wed in April, 1952. They have three children and five grandchildren. Bob was a truck driver and still drives part-time.

The next generation is beginning to make its marital mark as well. Edward, son of Milt and Hilda, has been married to Karen for over 30 years.

It is to be expected a family this large yet close would have a good time together. An annual family reunion allows everyone to keep up to date concerning all things Roecker. The 2001 edition was held in Williston at Virgil and Betty's. Present were family from Ohio, Michigan, Delaware, Colorado, Wisconsin, Kentucky, and Florida.

As the family grows in numbers and geographically, it will become more difficult to maintain the closeness enjoyed by the four brothers. If anything will hold a group this large close to each other, it will be the family values originally instilled by John and Ida Roecker.

Milton Roecker served on the USS Grundy 1943-46. His brother Virgil has been his guest at the Griggs/Grundy reunion.

Griggs-Grundy News,

Please tell me how to contact Jose Cabanillas, whose letter appeared in Volume 2, Issue 4 of the Griggs-Grundy Newsletter.

Thanks,
Peter Sundt
230 Arborway St
Houston, TX 77057-1320
713-780-4401
Psundt@aol.com

If any of you know how to contact Mr. Cabanillas, please let Mr. Sundt hear from you. ML&RS could not find the address from his letter in the last issue.

WHAT IS A VET?

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye.

Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin—holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity.

Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem.

You can't tell a vet just by looking.

He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.

He is the barroom loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 39th parallel.

She, or he, is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

He is the POW who went away one person and came back another—or didn't come back at all.

He is the Quantico drill instructor who has never seen combat—but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and

gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs.

He is the parade-riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.

He is one of the anonymous heroes in The Tomb of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deep.

He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket—palsied now and slow—who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

He is the ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being—a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.

He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, just lean over and say Thank You. That's all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU."

It's the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press. It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech. It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, who has given us the freedom to demonstrate. It is the soldier, who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.

Father Dennis Edward O'Brien,
Lt. Col., USMC