

GRIGGS-GRUNDY NEWS

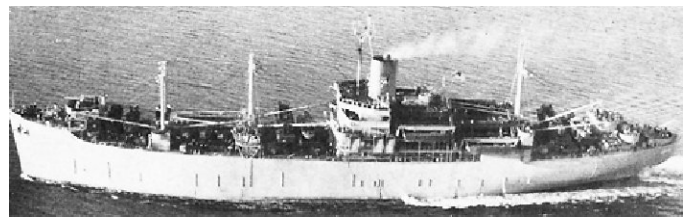
VOLUME 10 ISSUE 1

June 2009

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS GRIGGS AND USS GRUNDY



USS GRUNDY



USS GRIGGS

Special Points of Interest

- *On the cover, Charles Forshee talks about the waning attendance at the last several reunions and encourages you to attend this year's event in Albuquerque.*
- *Page two has an article about some changes in ratings in the Navy.*
- *Under Mail Call on page three, read one story about a farm boy's journey to manhood and one about some interesting assignments while in the Navy.*
- *"Too Busy for a Friend" on page four may make you think about the importance of letting people know how much they mean to you.*
- *If you wish to attend the reunion, please send in the coupon on page two or give us a call so we can get a registration packet to you.*

FROM THE DESK OF CHARLES FORSHEE

The next reunion for the *USS Griggs & USS Grundy* is fast approaching and the last three reunions have been very disappointing as far as attendance goes. Three of these reunions had no attendees from the *Grundy* and not enough from the *Griggs* to get a place that would welcome us to a site at a hotel or motel. That is what happened to the reunion that was supposed to be in St. Louis—not enough signed on for that reunion. As a result, it was held in Savannah, GA with the *USS Huntington*. There were 4 from the *Griggs*—Joe Locke and wife and Charles Forshee and wife. The reunion in Milwaukee, WI was better for the *Griggs'* attendees with 11 attendees and no *Grundy*. The reunion at Lancaster, PA had 3 affiliated with the *Griggs*—Charles Forshee, Tolvie, and Myra Forshee, my daughter. This year we are scheduled to go to Albuquerque, NM and meet with the *USS Huntington*, *USS Rowe*, plus the *Grundy* and the *Griggs*, and personally, I hope we

have a better turnout from the *Griggs & Grundy*. Since as far as the *Griggs & Grundy*, we have never had a reunion at this site before and there is a lot to see in this area. I have been there three times, mostly on the way through to San Antonio, TX, Las Vegas and Grand Canyon and when the wife and I went out to see Claude Graham and his wife. Spent the night in Albuquerque because it was snowing and we did not want to continue on toward home with it snowing. I know some of us are getting older and have had some problems with health, plus some members of both crews have passed away and they will be missed every time we have a reunion. Some of these members were regular attendees such as Joe Locke, Henry Kingsburg, Milton Roecker, Cloyd Knepp, Jr. and Robert Palmer and many more. This is the time if you have not sent in dues of \$15.00 to do so and make a decision to try to make this reunion one of the best ones ever.

**2009 USS GRIGGS/GRUNDY REUNION
SEPT. 17-20 ALBUQUERQUE, NM
RETURN COUPON ON PAGE 2 FOR REGISTRATION PACKET**



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 next reunion memorial service.

USS GRIGGS

Shepard Brown
Died April 12, 2009

Joseph Commisto, Sr.
(Shakedown—1946) QM3 N Div
Died July 19, 2004

USS GRUNDY

Wilbur Carr SM2/c
Date of death not reported

Henry Currie
Date of death not reported

Clyde Pigott
(1944-46) EM3/c
Died January 28, 2009

USS GRIGGS/USS GRUNDY ARE
WELCOME TO JOIN MEMBERS
OF
USS HUNTINGTON/USS ROWE

**SEPTEMBER 17-20,
2009**

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM
BEST WESTERN HOTEL**

If you are interested in attending the reunion, please return this coupon to **ML&RS, Inc** at our address to the right and we will mail you a registration packet.

Please send a 2009 registration packet for the USS Griggs/Grundy reunion to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

FLAG DAY JUNE 14

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress replaced the British symbol of the Grand Union flag with a design for 13 white stars in a circle on a field of blue and 13 red and white stripes, one for each state. Although not an official holiday, we celebrate June 14th as flag day.

STOREKEEPER, POSTAL CLERK RATINGS TO MERGE INTO LOGISTIC SPECIALIST RATING

By Mass Communications Specialist 3rd Class Devin Thorpe, Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. (NNS)— Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Gary Roughead, has approved the merger of the storekeeper (SK) and postal clerk (PC) ratings to the logistics specialist (LS) rating, according to a Navy message released Nov. 17.

The conversion from SK and PC ratings to LS officially begins Oct. 1, 2009 for all active-duty Sailors and Reserve component E-6 and above according to NAVADMIN 326/08. Conversion for Reserve component E-1 through E-5 begins April 1, 2010.

The SK rating badge will be used to represent the new LS rating. All PC personnel are required to convert uniform rating badge to the SK rating badge no later than Oct. 1, 2011.

“Over the past several years, the postal clerk rating has been shrinking. We went from having an enlisted authorization of almost 1,000 people, and now we’re down to 645. It’s at a point now that we’re losing billets faster than we lose people, which stifles promotion,” said Master Chief Postal Clerk (SW/AW) Ron Guyton, the Navy’s technical advisor for the supply ratings.

The rating merger overall will benefit the Sailors more than two separate rates would, said Guyton.

As an element of the Navy’s total force strategy, this merger will capitalize on the knowledge, skills and abilities found in the two ratings and apply them toward a unified mission according to the NAVADMIN.

“With most PCs gone from smaller ships, the storekeepers are doing that work already, and it’s

(Continued on page 3)

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 03/09 issue **\$547.23**
Received since 10/08* **\$455.11**
Funds available for 06/09
\$1002.34
Funds expended for 06/09 **\$190.01**

Ending Balance \$812.33

Please mail your **\$15.00 dues** to **ML&RS, Inc** at the address on page 4.

***Corrected dates**

Published By:
Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc
PO Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603

828-256-6008 (voice)
828-256-6559 (fax)

Dinamlrs@charterinternet.com
Karenmlrs@charterinternet.com

www.mlrsinc.com

“Our Reunions Work, So You Don’t Have To.”

(Continued from page 2)

been success. So now we're taking a bigger step and training more Sailors to do a wider variety of jobs. There's no way the Navy can lose by having better trained Sailors," Guyton said.



MAIL CALL

From Farm Boy to World Traveler
By: Dick Nostrant

World War II burst on the scene in December of 1941. Very soon, young men and women answered a call to defend their country. I soon discovered that I was not the only person who had not traveled very far from home, having lived on a horse farm outside Cazenovia, New York, and occasionally getting in to the big city of Syracuse.

What excitement in the air as our little group of enlistees headed for Great Lakes Naval Training Station—especially for me as I was given all the personal folders and travel vouchers for the thirty some odd young men simply because I was easily identified by the blue three-piece suit I was wearing. I was the youngest person of the group, but I stood out. Believe me, I never stood out from the crowd again in the three years, three months, sixteen days, fourteen hours and ten minutes I was in the US Navy.

Needless to say, we made it safely to boot camp. Following that, some of us headed to service schools (electrical for me) and then to Pascagoula, Mississippi where we participated in the keel laying ceremony for the *USS Griggs* APA 110. After about a month of working on the *Griggs* along with the civilian workers, I discovered a bulletin board displaying notices of other schools open to electrician mates. I signed up for a gyro compass

school, a projectionists school and an emergency generation school. Over the period of a couple months time, I saw more of the United States and had several days of travel time and learned some new skills. My folks saw me dropping in from time to time. What fun for me, each time I came back to the ship under construction, I was impressed at how much it had grown. I stayed with it while we put the finishing touches to it and got it ready for sea duty.

You know the rest of the story...we did our bit to win the war, then bring troops and some civilians home...I must have gotten in the habit of going to school, for I used the GI Bill to become a shop teacher for ten years and to eventually become a professor in engineering at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Time has flown; I found the right woman; we have been married fifty-seven years. My four sons and eight grandchildren seem to like to ask about WWII and I always have some positive things to tell them about living on a horse farm and then seeing the world on the *USS Griggs* APA 110.

My Most Interesting Assignments
By: Charles Forshee

These assignments were on both ships, first is on the *USS Baker* when we were escorting convoys to North Africa through the Straits of Gibraltar at night because of so many German submarines trying to sink the cargo vessels. This one convoy consisted of about 100 ships and the captain of our ship gave me a pair of binoculars and told me to tell him if we were getting too close to another ship. Of course we did change course a little as a result. Perhaps the captain wanted someone to blame if he ran into another ship.

Another time our ship, the *Baker*, was sent to Dakar, Africa with two more ships where we off loaded all the depth charges except those on the main deck and loaded three ships with French gold for transport to the Brooklyn Navy Yard for safe keeping.

Another time we were sent off the coast of Morocco to shoot off the guns and drop depth charges off the coast where we could see the lights on the beach. We got assigned to a small carrier, the *USS Card*, to hunt German submarines and we stayed out so long we were running out of food and oil for the diesel engines and very low on fuel for those engines. Finally we pulled into the Azores for fuel and etc. After that we made sonar contact with a German submarine and after two passes with dropped depth charges, the sub surfaced and we began firing every thing we had on board, including two torpedoes, 3 inch, 40 mm, 20 mm and 45 caliber hand held machine guns until they began jumping in the water; thus capturing 31 prisoners.

One assignment I did not like was every time we went into port it was my job to climb the ship's mast to cover the recognition lights with canvas covers. They did not provide any safety equipment (harness type) for these climbs. Always this was done just before entering port, that is where ground swells occur and that mast has a tendency to sway several feet in both directions. On the *USS Griggs*, we never had to cover these lights. One of the assignments on the *Griggs* was when it was commissioned I was designated to break the commission Pennant and hoist the Admiral's flag. The *Griggs* was training crews for other APAs at Rhode Island (Newport, RI) as part of our duties.

The most hazardous duty on the *Griggs* was at Okinawa because of the suicide threat to the ships, including ours. It got so bad I moved a mattress up to the bridge under the rangefinder and slept there to be ready for General Quarters. It was a long way from the aft portion of the ship to the bridge.

Don't know how the *Grundy* fared on this on the Bridge, but I did not have any complaints on the *Griggs* and the only one on the *Baker* was when I took the test for advancement to second class Petty Officer and had a higher score than

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

another guy and he got the advancement. The *Baker* assigned me to make protective covers out of canvas to cover long glasses and binoculars on the sewing machine, which I did. Also was given the job of cutting off pants for the officers to make shorts. Although it was not assigned to me, I took off the white stripes on the blue uniforms and replaced them with new ones when the owner was too lazy to wash them. They usually paid me extra for this chore.

Editor's Note: We would love to hear about your interesting assignments during your Navy days. Send stories to ML&RS at our address on page two.

TOO BUSY FOR A FRIEND

Submitted by Charles Forshee

One day a teacher asked her students to list the names of the other students in the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a space between each name. Then she told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left the room, each one handed in the papers. That Saturday, the teacher wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and listed what everyone else had said about that individual.

On Monday she gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. "Really?" she heard whispered. "I never knew that I meant anything to anyone!" and, "I didn't know others liked me so much," were most of the comments.

No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. She never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another. That group of students moved on.

Several years later, one of the students was killed in Vietnam and his teacher attended the funeral of that spe-

cial student. She had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. He looked so handsome, so mature. The church was packed with his friends. One by one those who loved him took a last walk by the coffin. The teacher was the last one to bless the coffin. As she stood there, one of the soldiers who acted as a pallbearer came up to her. "Were you Mark's math teacher?" he asked her. She nodded, "Yes." Then he said, "Mark talked about you a lot."

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates went together to a luncheon. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting to speak with his teacher. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it." Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been taped, folded and re-folded many times. The teacher knew without looking that the papers were the ones which she had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him.

"Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, he treasured it."

All of Mark's former classmates started to gather around. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home."

Chuck's wife said, "Chuck asked me to put his in our wedding album."

"I have mine too," Marilyn said. "It's in my diary."

Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. "I carry this with me at all times," Vicki said and without batting an eyelash, she continued. "I think we all saved our lives."

That's when the teacher finally sat down and cried. She cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again.

The density of people in society is so thick that we forget that life will end one day. And we don't know when that one day will be.

So please, tell the people you love and care for, that they are special and important. Tell them, before it is too late.

Remember, you reap what you sow. What you put into the lives of others comes back into your own.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The *GRIGGS-GRUDY NEWS* is the official publication of the *USS GRIGGS-GRUDY* 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.

ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be an monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the author to research each article.

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.
