

GRIGGS-GRUNDY NEWS

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 4

December 2003

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS GRIGGS AND GRUNDY



Special Points of Interest

- *The 2003 Asheville reunion was a lot of fun! The recap is our cover story.*
- *If you want to know who attended the reunion, there's a list on page two.*
- *Your coordinator has a message for you on page two. He has some important news about the 2004 reunion.*
- *Read about an important 150th anniversary of a family business under MAIL CALL. The owner is one of your Griggs/Grundy family.*
- *Read all about the Harrisburg area, the site of the 2004 reunion, on pages 5 & 6. Fill out the survey and return it promptly.*

2003 REUNION IN ASHEVILLE—GREAT!

Beautiful Asheville, NC, was the host city for the 2003 USS Griggs and USS Grundy reunion on October 13-16. The event was held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, which welcomed the fifteen former sailors and their fourteen guests. Registration began at noon on Monday and continued all afternoon. The hospitality room also opened to allow the attendees a place to gather for refreshments and getting acquainted. That evening at 5:00 PM everyone assembled for the first official event of the reunion which was the welcome reception. Hors d'oeuvres were served and introductions were made as everyone enjoyed seeing who was

attending the reunion. The rest of the evening was spent getting to know one another and sharing stories.

Tuesday morning broke with cloudy, rainy skies, but spirits were high as the tour to the Biltmore Estate left at 9:00 AM. The group thoroughly enjoyed touring the 255-room French Renaissance chateau built in 1895 by George Vanderbilt, filled with its original collection of 50,000 artworks, furnishings and antiques. Living areas, bedrooms, recreation areas, kitchens and servant's quarters were all available for viewing. It's hard to imagine actually living in a place so large and grand! After eating lunch at the Estate, the group then

boarded the bus for a riding tour of Asheville. The group arrived back at the hotel in time for a little relaxing before heading off again to dinner at the Pisgah View Ranch. At the ranch the group enjoyed the down-home country meal served family-style. True Southern favorites filled the tables and if anyone went away hungry, it was their own fault! Entertainment was by Ann Perkins and Memories Band. Eighty-eight year old, Stanley Masters played the mandolin! Also located on the ranch were several gift shops which some people took advantage of to buy souvenirs for family members back home. It had been a great day, but tiring,

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so most attendees were ready for bed when the bus dropped them off at the hotel for the evening. A few energetic persons, however, found their way into the hospitality room and talked for a while before retiring.

Wednesday's weather was a much hoped for improvement on the day before. The sun broke through and made a perfect day for the outdoor trip planned for the day. On the agenda today was a trip to Chimney Rock Park, located southeast of Asheville, high above Hickory Nut Gorge. After a spine-tingling ride up to the parking lot of the park, an elevator took the group up 26-stories through solid granite to reach the top of Chimney Rock. From atop there is a breath-taking 75-mile view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. After spending some time looking at the view, it was time for lunch. Boxed lunches were packed in canvas bags depicting Chimney Rock and were a big hit with everyone. After eating lunch, the group went back down to the bottom of Chimney Rock and toured the gardens before heading back to the hotel. It had been a beautiful day, with more to come later that evening. At 4:30 PM the group meet for their annual business meeting. Dr. Fenwick Watts was chosen as the reunion chairman for the USS Grundy and Charles Forshee for the USS Griggs. Harrisburg, PA will be the site for the 2004 reunion. The USS Griggs and USS Grundy banquet was next on the agenda. The evening began at 6:30 PM with pre-dinner cocktails and photo session, with the banquet beginning at 7:00 PM. Everyone enjoyed the lively conversation, good food, and seeing all the former crewmembers together in a formal setting. A memorial service was held during the banquet to remember all the crewmen who had passed away, especially those who had died since the last reunion. A bell tolled in their memory as the names of the deceased were read from the Honor Roll.

This had been a day to remember for everyone.

The last official event for the reunion was Sunday morning's breakfast buffet. Following the meal, it was time to return home to the ordinary routine of life. But for a few days, routine was broken, and new adventures were experienced. Good-byes were said and "See you next year in Harrisburg," was heard many times. See you there.

2003 REUNION ATTENDEES LIST

USS GRIGGS

Charles & Tolvie Forshee
 R. B. & Phyllis Kahl
 Joseph & Ruth Locke
 Allan & Jean Morton
 Bill & Chris Roberts
 Arthur & Shirley Thom

USS GRUNDY

Ted & Bernadette Cole
 Harry (Pat) & Wanda Fairall
 Ellsworth & Barbara Harlow
 Cloyd Knepp, Jr.
 Jacqueline & Cloyd Knepp III
 Robert & Robert F. Palmer
 Clyde Pigott
 Milton & Hilda Roecker
 Virgil & Betty Roecker
 Fenwick & Lillian Watts

Total Members: 15
Guests: 14
GRAND TOTAL: 29

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

Well, by now you have learned or been to the 2003 ship's reunion for the Griggs & Grundy held in Asheville, NC. There were several in attendance, but a whole lot missing or AWOL. We think those attending had a good time and enjoyed being together once again, but certainly missed those that did not attend for

whatever reason. Some were sick, some were low on finances because of doctor bills and other reasons.

It is time for those that haven't paid their dues of \$15.00 to do so, so the newsletter can be sent each quarter. Those that have moved since the reunion should send the change of address to ML&RS so they will continue to get the newsletter. The members present at the reunion voted to have it at Harrisburg, PA in 2004, so the man that got it started, Daniel Brown, could possibly attend since it would be near his home. They also voted to have it in early October, but since then we have learned that to have it 9/12, 13, 14, 15 it would be cheaper for the rooms and be more than likely much warmer weatherwise. There would be plane service for those choosing to fly to the reunion. There was some input about having it so the leaves would be at their peak in color change, this will probably be too early, but at the same time, we need to keep the cost down as much as possible.

We hope that those people that were sick or had members of the family sick, are making the road to recovery. and those that had property damage or had equipment going to the bad have found that solutions to overcome these hardships. As for myself, we had to replace the washing machine and dryer when we got home from Asheville. The water was running out on the floor when the tub would fill the initial time, but not on rinse or other cycles. The dryer was working, but was about twelve years old, so I got them both and gave the dryer to my grandson, who had helped me with plumbing in a dishwasher and commode that needed replacing that saved me a bunch of money—for plumbers come high. There might be some questions about the reunions or anything that I can answer, feel free to write, call or send an e-mail and we will try to find out the answer for you.

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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.

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.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE STAFF AT ML&RS, INC.



WELCOME MAT

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

*Allan Morton (USS Griggs)
4180 Rolling Oaks Dr
Winter Haven, FL 33880*

NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE

The custom of a National Christmas Tree in the United States was established by President Calvin Coolidge in 1923.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 09/03 issue **\$271.92**

Received since 09/03 **\$255.00**

Funds available for 12/03 **\$526.92**

Funds expended for 12/03 **\$137.99**

Ending Balance \$388.93

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS & DUES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO ML&RS. ADDRESS BELOW.

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



MAIL CALL

THE VILLAGE NURSERIES
A HISTORY
Submitted by Joseph Locke

Few businesses can claim so enduring a presence as The Village Nurseries, just outside of Hightstown, New Jersey. First started in 1853, Charles Black planted shade trees and evergreens on twenty acres. In 1875 Charles purchased a larger farm and offered his brother Joseph H. Black a partnership so the nursery became known as "The Village Nurseries, Charles Black & Bro. Proprietors."

It was at this time the nursery began producing what was to be the mainstay of the business for most of the next 100 years. Small fruits and an abundance of peach trees were sold to orchardists throughout the country. 1888 saw the next major change where Walter C. Black bought out his ailing uncle and the proprietors became Jos. H. Black & Son. Walter added an additional farm to the nursery and production increased to 200,000 or more peach trees per year and an equal number of small fruits. Their 1906 catalog includes 22 varieties of strawberries; including "Joe" a variety developed at the nursery; raspberries, currants, gooseberries, 21 different grapes and 55 varieties of peaches. Each category of entries is accompanied by a beautiful line drawing that is characteristic of the period but has lost none of its appeal through the years. From a production perspective, only the Elberta peach looks familiar today, but the price of .20 each for a 4 to 6 foot tree certainly seems like an impossibility in any century! Also included is "The New Cherry, 'Mercer'", another Village Nursery introduction and touted for its freedom from rot and worms as

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well as unexcelled table and canning quality. The last few pages of the catalog are devoted to ornamentals, nut trees; including the doomed American Chestnut; and an enticing selection of roses.

WWI created a labor shortage and the focus of the business shifted more toward the retail end. Walter C. Black became the sole proprietor after the death of his father. Walter had three daughters. Two of their husbands attempted to follow their father-in-law in the business, but found the work too difficult. Time marched on and three grandsons also tried to follow their grandfather. One attended Rutgers to study the field, but WWII took all three young men for the duration of the war. Upon their return, only the youngest was interested in the business, but was still attending college. Walter was discouraged. His failing health limited his activities severely and the business that had been his life was beginning to fall down around him. Finally, in 1950, his grandson, Joseph Black Locke, joined the business and became a full partner in 1951. The proprietors of The Village Nurseries became Black & Locke and then Joseph Black Locke in 1957 when Walter was 90 years of age. Walter continued to function in an advisory capacity until his death at 93.

Walter contributed to his community in many diverse ways and served on every board the town had to offer at one time or another. The Walter C. Black grade school is named after him for his many years of dedicated service. Unfortunately, the wars, the depression and some poor investments forced the sale of much of the land that once produced those many fruit trees. The well-acclaimed Peddie School has an equally well recognized golf course that sits on ground that was once part of the nursery. This was land originally purchased by Walter and later sold to the school, his alma mater, for the actual cost to him many years earlier. The money went to pay off debts, but if a man's success is

measured by his friends and what he has given back to the world in which he lives, Walter C. Black was an extremely successful man.

Joseph Black Locke continued to move the business in the direction of retail ornamentals, taking advantage of the emerging neighborhoods that grew around him. Joe Locke is still a daily fixture at the nursery, but the current proprietor is Michael Mendenko, a long time employee and most recently, Vice-President of the nursery. Mike grew up in Hightstown and comes from a long line of local farmers. Now the nursery sits on seven acres. New houses can be seen over the tops of the trees, but the flavor of the area is still rural. The Village Nurseries continues as a cornerstone of the community. The nursery is always a landmark, an integral part of local history, and until recently even the polling place for rural voters. Mike, with Joe's presence a constant resource, maintains the diversity and quality of plant material that has been the trademark of the business since its inception. Backyard gardeners and professionals alike can appreciate the knowledge and enthusiasm that is part of the routine. If you are seeking the unusual, The Village Nurseries is a great place to start.

Congratulations on 150 years of business. May you continue to grow.

(Joe Locke is a member of the USS Griggs)

Prepared by Pegi Ballister-Howells,
May 7, 2003

TIME OUT FOR SOME AMUSEMENT

LETTER FROM A FARM KID NOW AT THE MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT IN SAN DIEGO.

Dear Ma and Pa,

I am well. Hope you are. Tell Brother Walt and Brother Elmer the Marine Corps beats working for old man Minch by a mile. Tell them to join up quick before maybe all the places are filled. I was restless at first be-

cause you got to stay in bed till nearly 6 a.m., but am getting so I like to sleep late.

Tell Walt and Elmer all you do before breakfast is smooth your cot and shine some things. No hogs to slop, feed to pitch, mash to mix, wood to split, fire to lay. Practically nothing. Men got to shave, but it is not so bad, there's warm water.

Breakfast is strong on trimmings like fruit juice, cereal, eggs, bacon, etc., but kind of weak on chops, potatoes, ham, steak, fried eggplant, pie and other regular food. But tell Walt and Elmer you can always sit by the two city boys that live on coffee. Their food plus yours holds you till noon when you get fed again. It's no wonder these city boys can't walk much.

We go on "route" marches, which the Platoon Sergeant says are long walks to harden us. If he thinks so, it is not my place to tell him different. A "route march" is about as far as to our mailbox at home. Then the city guys get sore feet and we all ride back in trucks. The country is nice, but awful flat.

The Sergeant is like a schoolteacher. He nags some. The Captain is like the School Board. Majors and Colonels just ride around and frown. They don't bother you none. This next will kill Walt and Elmer with laughing. I keep getting medals for shooting. I don't know why. The bulls-eye is near as big as a chipmunk head and don't move. And it ain't shooting back at you like the Higgett boys at home. All you got to do is lie there all comfortable and hit it. You don't even load your own cartridges. They come in boxes.

Then we have what they call hand-to-hand combat training. You get to wrestle with them city boys. I have to be real careful though, they break real easy. It ain't like fighting with that ole bull at home. I'm about the best they got in this except for that Tug Jordan from over in Silver Lake. He joined up the same time as me. But I'm only 5'6" and 130 pounds and he's 6'8" and weighs near 300 pounds dry.

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Be sure to tell Walt and Elmer to hurry and join before other fellows get onto this setup and come stampeding in.

Your loving daughter,
Jolene

Hope you enjoyed that!

PENNSYLVANIA FACTS

1. Hershey is considered the Chocolate Capital of the United States.
 2. The Rockville Bridge in Harrisburg is the longest stone arch bridge in the world.
 3. Originally Bellefonte, a town now with a population of 5,000, was once considered to be Pennsylvania's capital. But Harrisburg was chosen because of the easy navigation on the Susquehanna River.
 4. Actor Jimmy Stewart was born and raised in the town of Indiana. Each year at Christmas the downtown area is decorated in the theme of the film "It's a Wonderful Life."
 5. Philadelphia was once the capital of the United States.
 6. Each year on Christmas Day the "Crossing of the Delaware" is reenacted at Washington Crossing.
 7. Pennsylvania is the only original colony not bordered by the Atlantic Ocean.
 8. Drake Well Museum in Titusville is on the site where Edwin L. Drake drilled the world's first oil well in 1859 and launched the modern petroleum industry.
 9. In 1946 Philadelphia became home to the first computer.
 10. Little League Baseball's first World Series was held in 1946 in Williamsport.
- _____

COME TO HARRISBURG, PA IN 2004

In order to let you have input in what you would like at your reunion, a preview of some of the attractions in the Harrisburg area will be described and you will then be asked to choose which ones you would like to see on the agenda of your reunion. Read the descriptions and then fill out the survey and return it to Military Locator & Reunion Service and we will use your choices to make up the reunion packages. Here are some things you might like to know about the Harrisburg area:

ABOUT HARRISBURG

Named for John Harris, who operated a ferry at the present site. His son, John Jr., laid out the town in 1785 and gave the land to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Harrisburg is located on the Susquehanna River, which played an important part in its selection as the capital of Pennsylvania in 1812. Its location also played a large part in the early development of the Pennsylvania canal system and the subsequent development of the railroads, highways and airlines. Today, Harrisburg is one of the most important commercial centers and distribution points in the East.

ATTRACTIONS IN AREA

HARRISBURG STATE CAPITOL BUILDING:

The statehouse is an Italian Renaissance-style structure and is an outstanding example of architecture. It contains collections of art and sculpture, including large murals. On the floor of the main hallway, tiles show Pennsylvania's history and symbols. At the dedication in 1906, President Teddy Roosevelt described this structure as "the handsomest building I ever saw." The dome of the capitol rises 272 feet and weighs 52 million pounds. It was modeled after St. Peter's Basilica in

Rome, and its beautiful staircase looks like the one from the Paris Opera.

NATIONAL CIVIL WAR MUSEUM:

The only museum in the United States that attempts to portray the story of the Nation's Civil War. Equally balanced presentations will be humanistic in nature without bias to Union or Confederate causes.

MIDDLETOWN & HUMMELSTOWN RAILROAD:

Board 1920 vintage passenger coaches at the 1891 Middletown Station and Gift Shop for an hour and a quarter, 11-mile round trip ride through the scenic Swatara Creek Valley. Hear live narration of history and folklore of the area.

GETTYSBURG:

Revisit the scene of the famous Battle of Gettysburg and the site of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. There are over 1,000 monuments and cannon along over 40 miles of scenic roads. Also see the scene of Picket's Charge, General Robert E. Lee's Headquarters, Little Round Top, and the Devil's Den. Visit the shrine to the Union and Confederate soldiers who fought here.

LANCASTER COUNTY:

The scenic, rolling farmlands of Lancaster County and peaceful countryside where the Amish still live without electricity will take you back in time. See the Amish countryside dotted with huge farm houses and barns. Roll past the horse-pulled black buggies still used by the Amish people. The Pennsylvania Dutch Country welcomes visitors with incredible food and world renowned crafts.

In the past, ML&RS has been able to arrange a bountiful lunch and a tour of a real Amish home. This is always a favorite treat of any visit to Lancaster County.

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HERSHEY:

Visit the Hershey Chocolate Visitor's Center. Take a fascinating tour ride that will teach you how chocolate is made. It ends with a free sample!

Hershey Gardens is a spectacular 23-acre botanical garden featuring a 3 1/2 acre award-winning rose garden, an outstanding display of annual flowering color and an outdoor Butterfly House with over 400 butterflies.

HARLEY DAVIDSON PLANT TOUR:

Located in York, PA, this plant will give you a close look at what it takes to make the legend roll on. After a short film, you will begin a tour of the manufacturing and assembly of Dyna, Softa motorcycles.

STURGIS PRETZEL HOUSE:

Visit the first commercial pretzel bakery in America. Legend says that in 1850, Julius Sturgis was given the pretzel recipe by a hobo as a token of appreciation for being invited to dine with the Sturgis family one evening. Sturgis was already baking bread for a business and added pretzels after having been given the recipe. Soon he dropped the bread business and started baking pretzels exclusively. Now owned by Clyde and Barbara Ann Tshudy, it is a state-of-the-art bakery, turning out 245 pretzels in a minute or five tons of hard pretzels a day.

2004 GRIGGS/GRUNDY SURVEY HARRISBURG, PA

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey of the attractions in the Harrisburg area and return it to Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc. We will use the surveys to custom design your reunion to what you want to do.

PLEASE CHECK THE ATTRACTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE ON THE REUNION AGENDA:

- Harrisburg State Capitol _____
- National Civil War Museum _____
- Middletown & Hummelstown Railroads _____
- Gettysburg _____
- Lancaster County (Amish Country) _____
- Hershey _____
- Harley Davidson Plant _____
- Sturgis Pretzel House _____

REUNION FORMAT:

- Would you like a Welcome Reception the first evening of the reunion?
Yes _____ No _____
- Do you prefer dinner together as a group at the hotel on Friday evening _____ or have the evening free to dine on your own? _____
- Do you prefer breakfast all three mornings _____ or only on Sunday? _____
- Do you want entertainment after the banquet? Yes _____ No _____

Your comments and suggestions are welcome: _____

**GRIGGS/GRUNDY
2004 REUNION**

**SUN., SEPT 12-
WED., SEPT. 15**

HARRISBURG, PA

Return to:

**Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc.
PO Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603**

Or Fax: 828-256-6559

RETURN SURVEY BY FEB. 13