

GRIGGS-GRUNDY NEWS

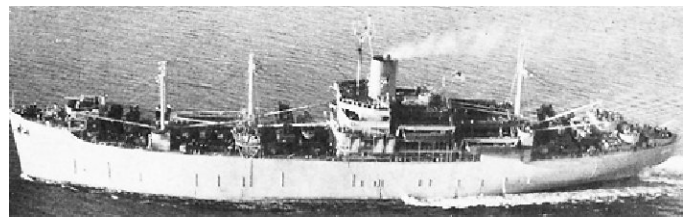
VOLUME 9 ISSUE 3

September 2008

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS GRIGGS AND USS GRUNDY



USS GRUNDY



USS GRIGGS

Special Points of Interest

- *Read about the 2008 reunion in the cover story.*
- *Charles Forshee has some interesting statistics about the USS Griggs crew. See his article on page two.*
- *Do you remember leaving the Navy? See what some of your shipmates have to say about this subject on page three.*
- *Life goes by so fast! Read about one man's way to visually remind himself of its passing. "3900 Saturdays" is on page three.*
- *Albuquerque, NM will be the site of the 2009 reunion. See what there will be to do there for you next year.*

2008 LANCASTER REUNION REPORT

The 2008 *USS Griggs* (APA-110)/*USS Grundy* (APA-111) reunion was held together with the *USS Huntington* (CL-107) on September 18—21 at the Holiday Inn Visitors Center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Charles and Tolvie Forshee (*USS Griggs*) were the only representatives from the *Griggs/Grundy* group.

The reunion began on Thursday with the opening of registration and the Hospitality Room. Attendees used the Hospitality Room to get acquainted with any new members and to catch up on the news from old friends. Memorabilia brought in by members was on display and refreshments were available to accompany the stories being told. Thursday evening at 5:00 PM a welcome reception was held as the first formal activity of the reunion. Hors d'oeuvres and drinks were served as everyone was welcomed to the reunion by Gene Volcik, coordinator for the *USS Huntington*. The rest of the evening was spent at dinner on one's own and sharing stories in the Hospitality Room.

On Friday the group took a tour of the Amish farmlands—including a bakery, winery and family craft store. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful scenery and shop-

ping and then had a delicious lunch at the Plain and Fancy restaurant. That evening the social hour began at 6:00 PM followed at 7:00 PM with the Amish-themed dinner. After dinner the group enjoyed a Yankee Swap gift exchange. Each individual or couple was asked to bring a gift representative of their hometown or state. Numbers were drawn for each gift and the winner got to take the gift or "swap" it for one already opened. It is always fun to see what items are brought in and what each one gets to take home.

Saturday was a day of leisure, with the only daytime activity being the 3:00 PM business meeting. Albuquerque, NM was selected as the reunion location for 2009. The pre-dinner cocktail hour and photo session began at 6:00 PM with everyone arriving all dressed up for a more formal evening than the previous ones. Individual, couple and group photos were made as everyone enjoyed their favorite beverage. The banquet began with the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the banquet meal the Memorial Service in memory of all those shipmates who had passed away since the last reunion was

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held. Gene Volcik led the ceremony. Names of the deceased were read and a bell tolled in their memory. Then it was time to say good night to everyone, especially those who would be leaving early the next morning.

Sunday morning's breakfast was the last event of the reunion. Farewells, hugs and handshakes were the order of the day. Albuquerque will be a wonderful site for 2009, so we hope all will be able to attend next year.

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

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 07/08 issue **\$926.03**
 Received since 07/08 **\$0.00**
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 Funds expended for 09/08 **\$190.30**

Ending Balance \$735.73

Please mail your \$15.00 dues to ML&RS, Inc at the address above.

MEMBERS OF USS GRIGGS/USS GRUNDY ARE WELCOME TO JOIN MEMBERS OF USS HUNTINGTON /USS ROWE IN ALBUQUERQUE, NM FOR THE 2009 REUNION

FROM THE DESK OF CHARLES FORSHEE

Out of curiosity I have put together all the states that the crew on the *Griggs* were from and it is amazing that with all the states and backgrounds of the people that could get a fine cooperating team such as we had together. To my knowledge, we only had two people go AWOL and some minor problems of sorts to contend with and had a proficient bunch.

The states are as follows: California, New Hampshire, Texas, Louisiana, New Jersey, Arkansas, Virginia, Ohio, Massachusetts, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, Tennessee, Illinois, Washington, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, Minnesota, Rhode Island. This is the states the officers were from when their addresses were written down. The enlisted men were from some of these states also, but Michigan, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Connecticut, Kansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, Washington DC, Maryland, Colorado, Nebraska, Vermont, Delaware, Oklahoma, Utah, and Montreal Quebec, Canada, Kinchmore Hill, England and Guam were included as well.

Did not make a list of how many members were from each state, but I believe it would be interesting to do this some time in the future, but with 39 states and 3 from other areas divided into a crew of about 500 it would have averaged about 13 from each state and one each from out of the states.

By the time this newsletter gets to members our reunion in Lancaster will be history. I will be looking forward to seeing as many as can come in person. Don't be AWOL. Have not heard from but two that said they were not able to attend. One couple from the *Grundy* and one couple from the *Griggs*. Both have legitimate reasons. Also it will be time to send dues in for the newsletter which is \$15.00 still and should be sent to ML&RS, Inc.

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.

TALES OF LEAVING THE NAVY

“What was the process of leaving the Navy like? Was there any kind of ceremony, or did you just pack your sea bag and walk off the ship? Did you have any kind of celebration, either with your Navy buddies or back at home? How was your trip home?”

These questions were posed by e-mail to USS Griggs/Grundy Shipmates and we are happy to publish the following responses:

Peter Sundt:

Having completed our role in Operation Magic Carpet, the huge project to bring troops home from the Pacific, the *Grundy* was decommissioned in Norfolk, VA in April or May 1946. Decommissioning a navy ship is quite a project in itself. All of the equipment and armaments aboard had to be inventoried before being removed to warehouses ashore. When we discovered that a lot of the electronic gear was being

destroyed to keep it off the surplus market, some of us “liberated” a few pieces for ourselves. Also, the executive officer drove his station wagon up to the gangway, loaded up the ship’s china from the officers’ wardroom, and calmly drove away. Once the decommissioning of the *Grundy* was completed, most of the crew were eligible for discharge from the Navy. After saying farewell to the good ship *Grundy*, our home for 18 months, we were sent for a few weeks to a temporary holding camp comprised of dismal Quonset huts surrounded by a sea of mud. What a change from our clean quarters aboard ship. When we finally got our traveling orders, some of the Texans were sent to Camp Wallace near Houston for discharge. As I was the ranking petty officer, I was charged with escorting the group back to Houston on the train. At every stop on the two day journey, everyone got off to have a snack, a few beers, or

whatever. It was a job to round them up when the conductor yelled, “All aboard!” The movie “The Last Detail,” with Jack Nicholson, recounts a similar incident. Anyway, the detail made it to Camp Wallace in one piece. I well remember lining up to receive my discharge papers and \$300 in mustering out pay. We were then loaded on a bus and driven to downtown Houston, where my mother picked me up. I was not yet 21 years old. That was one happy day!

Allan Morton (USS Griggs):

When I was discharged in 1945 I packed my seabag, left the ship, caught a train to Niagara Falls, NY. No celebration. Went back to work the next week.

Ted Fulop:

Everything was uneventful.

3900 SATURDAYS

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the garage with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it:

I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the

broadcasting business. He was telling whom-ever he was talking with something about ‘a thousand marbles.’ I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say:

“Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. It's too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital,” he continued. ‘Let me tell you something that has helped me keep my own priorities.’

And that's when he began to explain his theory of a ‘thousand marbles.’

‘You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years.

‘Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is

the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part.

‘It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail’, he went on, ‘and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays.’ I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. Ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles I took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear.

‘Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life.

There's nothing like watching your

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time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight.

'Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure that if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.

'It was nice to meet you, Tom. I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. This is a 75 Year old Man, K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!'

You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. 'C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast.'

'What brought this on?' she asked with a smile.

'Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. And hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles.'

And so, as one smart bear once said...'If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you.' - Winnie the Pooh.

Submitted by Charles Forshee

ABOUT ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque is known as "The Duke City" and was founded on 1706 by the ambitious provisional governor don Freancisco Cuervo Y Valdez. The town sprung up around what is today known as Old Town.

Around the plaza the streets are lined with 300 year-old adobe structures that stand as a testament to the early settlers. The city's first church, San Felipe De Neri continues to serve the Catholic community as it has for 300 years.

Nearby is Kirtland Air Force Base and the National Atomic Museum. Here you can view the concert of events that led to the development of the Manhattan Project. It is the nation's only congressionally chartered museum of nuclear science and history. The museum was established in 1969 as an intriguing place to learn the story of the Atomic Age, from early research of nuclear development through today's peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Here you can explore how nuclear science continues to influence our world. The museum strives to present through permanent and changing exhibits and displays the diverse applications of nuclear energy and its pioneers. You can view displays presenting the development of the Atomic Age, including replicas of the world's first two atomic weapons, Little Boy and Fat Man, which were built and used at the end of World War II.

Indian crafts and jewelry abound. For example, in the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, a wonderful facility run by the nineteen Indian pueblos of New Mexico, you can take a self-guided tour and shop in the 7,000 square feet facility.

If you like dinosaurs and fossils, you'll love the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science.

The mystique of New Mexico's Native American tribes is extremely powerful.

Petroglyph Park is on the west mesa in Albuquerque. Here you can stroll the paved footpaths that wind among volcanic rocks as you ponder the meanings of the petroglyphs (carvings into the rocks). Although there is no definite way to date the 'glyphs, it is thought that the oldest in this area are nearly 3,000 years old.

Acoma Indian Pueblo, is located one hour to the west. We'll walk on the mesa where the Acoma Indians have lived for nearly a thousand years. Here in this "oldest con-

tinuously inhabited city." An Indian guide will lead you through the earthen streets, past adobe homes. About a dozen families continue to live here year-round without electricity or running water as their ancestors did. The church here is on the National Register of Historic Places. There will be opportunities to purchase crafts and home baked goods on the mesa top. **NOTES:** Wear comfortable walking shoes, the mesa top is uneven rock and sand. The walk is almost a mile and takes a little over an hour. Bring a hat for shade and dress in layers – be prepared for heat or cold.

Sandia Mountain dominates the eastside of Albuquerque with its 5,000 ft vertical rise. A visit to the top of this mountain is a much sought after experience by visitors. Our 15-minute tram ride takes us through 4 biological life zones and reveals deep canyons and an awe-inspiring view not soon to be forgotten. We will view the sunset and then ride the tram back down as the city lights begin to twinkle. We will enjoy dinner and Las Vegas style gaming at the nearby, beautiful Sandia Casino. **Notes: Due to the Tram's elevation, 10,378 ft, individuals with heart conditions or respiratory problems should consult their doctor.**

A visit to New Mexico is not complete without experiencing the capital city of **Santa Fe**, with its unusual charm and historical significance. You'll travel the Turquoise Trail Scenic Byway through old mining towns and stop for a break in Madrid, which is now a thriving artist colony. Once in Santa Fe the guide will lead a walking tour of Santa Fe Plaza pointing out historic churches, shops and museums. This unique community offers wonderful, eclectic shops and history is everywhere. There is such a wealth of charms that you'll find it hard to experience them all in one day. Take time to meet the people, taste the food and explore hidden courtyards, including Loretto Chapel Museum with its "Miraculous Staircase". There will be free time on Santa Fe Plaza for shopping and lunch.