

PAWCATUCK PILOT

Volume 14 Issue 4

March 2007

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS PAWCATUCK AO-108



Special Points of Interest

- *Some details of the reunion are coming to light. See Dave Willis and Mark McPherson's remarks on the first two pages.*
- *Seven names for Welcome Mat are on page three. We hope to see some of them at the reunion.*
- *So many great stories are in Deck Force beginning on page three! Stories from liberties in Germany, Scotland, France, Monte Carlo, Norway to memories of the Cuban Missile Crisis and much, much more are in this issue.*
- *A new series of letters from the Captain begin on page eight, as well as the continuation of the 1952 Cruise Journal.*

WILLIS'S WORDS OF WISDOM

USS Pawcatuck AO-108 15th Annual Reunion Jacksonville, Florida Sea Turtle Hotel

Shipmates and Pawcatuck Family,

In eight weeks we will be meeting again for our ship reunion. This last year has passed by really fast and I have been busy out here in Arizona. I hope you all had a great Holiday Season and that this year will be a good year for everybody from our family.

This year will be another reunion to remember. We have some things planned and as your reunion coordinator I hope that many of you will be coming back. Of course I hope that many of you will join us for

the very first time too. Each year as your reunion coordinator I enjoy seeing shipmates come together after many years since you last met.

On December 27th 2006, our past asst. reunion coordinator, Joe Nicastro, passed away after a short illness. I was informed by shipmate Cal Alden by email during Joe's illness and then the phone call came. I was able to go back for the funeral which was held on December 30th. During the viewing over 400 people came by to pay their respects to Joe. On Saturday Ed Bernier was able to come from his home in Belcher-town, Ma. for the funeral.

I hope by this time you

have sent your reservation in for this year's reunion. We are expecting over 100 this year, so get those reservations in and come and join your shipmates and the rest of the Pawcatuck Family.

Again we would like to see many widows and family members of shipmates join us this year. Remember we are a family and want you to join us for a great time.

Any shipmate who was on the ship back during the Cuban crisis and made a Med cruise in 1962/63 contact me. A shipmate would like a copy of the cruise book if there was one made during that time.

Until April 15th have a

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(Continued from page 1)

good spring and we will see you in Jacksonville.

Yours,
David Willis
Reunion coordinator for the USS PAWCATUCK AO-108

MCPHERSON'S MESSAGE

TEE IT UP CAPTAIN WANTS TO PLAY GOLF!

Fellow shipmates, by now I hope you have received your Reunion Reservation Packets and all have completed and returned them, in order that this, our 15th year, may be one of our biggest reunions yet. As you have noticed there are several interesting events planned for us each day.

Dave Willis and myself have had many discussions this year over the phone lines as well as over the Internet service. We have made some changes for this year's reunion; one of them is that we have arranged for the Chaplin from NS Mayport, to conduct our Memorial Service as well as we have ordered a Wreath with our emblem inside, to be used during the service. As you noticed in the reservation form, we have included a Sunday Evening outing for those who like Dinner Theaters. We have hopefully, along with our Reunion Service group, planned a great time for all in Jacksonville, Florida.

TEE TIME: Captain Honour has invited any shipmate who would like to play a round of golf with him please contact him directly - propose that those interested in the Golf Outing, opt out of tour of St. Augustine- in lieu thereof, the Captain will pick up players at the Sea Turtle Inn Tuesday morning and proceed to golf course - following play we will have lunch at Bogey's 19th hole and then we will tour around

base prior to return to Sea Turtle Inn. Golfers will need only picture ID card - driver's license will do - to enter base riding with Capt Honour.

As a reminder, if any shipmate can still fit into their uniforms, I would appreciate if you would wear them to the Memorial Service as well as our Tuesday Evening Banquet. Also please keep your donations coming in to support the Pawcatuck Pilot, our newsletter.

Looking forward to seeing all.

Mark McPherson
Assistant Reunion Coordinator
USS PAWCATUCK AO-108

Financial Statement

Balance after 12/06 issue

\$584.26

Funds received since 12/06

\$275.00

Funds available for 03/07

\$859.26

Funds used for 03/07 issue

\$157.88

Funds used for flowers for Joe Nicastro **\$64.09**

Balance remaining for 06/07 issue

\$637.29

From now on the Pilot will be mailed only to those who have returned the coupon to receive it by postal mail. All others may access the newsletter on the internet at www.mlrsinc.com/pawcatuck. Please continue to contribute \$5.00 for the publication of the newsletter. Send contributions to ML&RS, Inc at the address below.

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

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The PAWCAUCK PILOT is the official publication of the USS PAWCATUCK AO-108 Association. It will be published quarterly in March, June, September, and December, *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 PAWCATUCK. 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.

GREAT ISSUE FOR MARCH!

Thanks to the wonderful response to our e-mail request for stories for this issue, our March issue is one of the best ever. A BIG THANK YOU to all who sent in stories!!! This issue is filled, with some even left over for the next issue too!



WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates have been located recently. Welcome aboard. We hope to see you at the reunion and that you will take an active part in the association. We welcome:

Jerry Rooks (1956-58)
P.O. Box 7192
Newman, GA 30271
770-252-8206

Jeff Cowan (1974-76) ETN2
1077 W Main St
Ravenna, OH 44266
330-297-1077
ffej1952@yahoo.com

Tom Jordan
(1979-82) IC2 E/M Div
24 Westfield Rd
Fletcher, NC 28732
828-551-2651
jord479@bellsouth.net

Charles Knox
(1946-50) CS3 Baker
1399 E Drive
Shallotte, NC 28470
910-754-5903

Randy Mosley
(1971-75) BM3 2nd Div
505 San Salvador Dr
North Augusta, SC 29841
803-279-0692
rmosley@comcast.net

Matt Shear
(1972-75) RM2 OC
9815 Pineydale Ct
Semmes, AL 36575
251-645-3929
mattshear@bellsouth.net

Thomas Hennard
(1973-75) QMC Nav
2380 Hampton Falls Dr W
Jacksonville, FL 32224
904-223-9735
TWH11@bellsouth.net



TAPS

The Pawcatuck Pilot has learned of the following deaths since the last newsletter. Our deepest sympathy goes to the widows, families and friends of the deceased. Anyone who knows or learns of a shipmate's death, you are requested to notify the newsletter so that person can be listed in TAPS and also on the Honor Roll at the next reunion.

Howard Honious (1950-52)
Date of death not reported

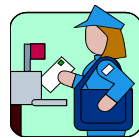
Deroy Hanson
(1968-69) LCDR XO
Died February 10, 2007

Gilbert Liverette (1953-58)
Died September 28, 2006

Jack Fickes
(1948-53) MM3C E Div
Died January 12, 2007

Derwood Posey (1953-55)
Died November 23, 2001

Joseph Nicaastro
(1956-58) RM2 Ops
Died December 27, 2006



DECK FORCE

PAWCATUCK MEMORIES

The day I remember best on the Pawcatuck was the day I mustered out of active duty at the end of four years in March, 1967. The ship was leaving Craney Island for refresher training in GITMO that morning, but the personnel office didn't have my discharge paperwork ready on time. We started steaming out Hampton Roads, and I darn sure didn't want to

go to GITMO. LCDR Dan Garland, the XO, finally signed my papers just as the last tug was ready to cast off; so I dropped my gear down to the deck of the tug and jumped after it to get a ride back to NOB! That was a close call!

My worst memories are of winter storms in the North Atlantic, including one on the way from Boston to Lorain in 1966. Many of us had our cars loaded on the O-1 deck, and the waves nearly took one of them. Its bumper nearly tore off. During such storms we were not allowed out on deck, and you could jump up ladders by timing your jump for when the ship dropped out from under you. I remember walking down a passage way with first my right foot and then the left treading on the bulkheads so as to stay up right!

Another memory was going through the locks in the Welland Canal on that same trip. We were 78 ft wide and the locks were only 80 ft. The Deck Gang hung creosoted railroad ties over the sides as fenders, and we watched them nearly melt and go up in smoke as we scraped along. Also, the port aft gun tub suffered a big dent from hitting an overhanging railroad bascule bridge. That was hairy!

Liberty in Hamburg, Germany, maybe a year earlier, had its moments. I'll bet anyone aboard at the time remembers the "Green Door" red light district, which was fun for those of us on SP duty, but too much fun for those not on duty. A lot of the crew, including the Radio Officer, probably don't remember how they got back to the ship out in the harbor. Liberty expired at midnight the last night there, and 20 to 30% of our crew didn't muster in the morning before sailing time, although we found a number of supernumeraries from other ships aboard. The fleet had to send liberty boats around the harbor to other ships collecting crewmembers who had taken the wrong boat back the night before and depositing surplus crew who had

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slept aboard Pawcatuck. That delayed sailing at least two hours. Capt. Wall held mast and confined the miscreants to their quarters for a week, including the Radio (Communication) Officer.

On the other hand, I remember being waked up at 0200 while I was at Craney Island one night. The messenger whispered that the Captain had made it back aboard but was collapsed on the fuel pipe by the quarterdeck. I whispered back, "Tell the OOD to very quietly round up a working party and carry him to his bunk." Nevertheless, however hung over he may have been, Capt. Wall was up on the bridge at 0600 to take the ship out of harbor!

Ted Guy

Dear Karen,

I don't have any extra ordinary stories about the "PAW" but one that I remember well was when we were just through the locks of the Wellen Canal in route to be converted to a JUMBO OILER. We were about a half a day out of the last lock, and we had a Canal Pilot on board to keep us in the channel. As Operations Officer, I naturally spent most of the day on the bridge to keep the Captain and XO advised of our progress and assist the young navigator. The pilot got confused and told the Helmsman to go to port 10 degrees. Since I was watching the chart and the shoreline ahead, I could not see an opening in the coast line and went to the pilot and asked if we should not be turning to Starboard? He immediately gave the order to shift the rudder to full right, and I passed the word on the P.A. System to standby to let go the anchor. The Captain and XO heard the order to "Standby the Anchor," and came immediately to the bridge. By the time they got there the ship's swing to Port (left) stopped and started Starboard (right). In short, we missed running aground by a very close few feet. Of course the Pilot apologized, with the

excuse that he thought we were further up the channel and that he turned too soon and admitted he was wrong.

When we got to the port where we were to start to strip the ship, in preparations for going into the Dry Dock, most of the officers and crew were given their orders to their next duty station. I was not one who received orders. The Executive Officer said that he would write orders for me to take some Crypto material to D.C. along with the Communications Officer. My orders were to visit my Detailer and pick up my orders. If they were not ready, I was to go on leave until they arrived. When we got to Washington, my Detailer read the orders and said that the orders I had were not authorized and they should not have been written. My reply was, "OK, where do I go now, the ship is being decommissioned?" After some thought, he had orders drafted which told me to proceed on leave until he could send me new orders. This turned out great for me because I received orders to report to the USS Graham County (LST-1176) as Executive Officer, home ported in Little Creek, VA, where my family was located. Of course, the Graham County was in the Med on deployment at the time. So in short, the final trip of the AO 108 was an interesting step in my career.

After the Graham County, I went to Iran for a 2 year tour as part of the MAAG. I got out of Iran just before Desert Storm, and from there, I went as Executive Officer, the Commanding Officer of the Betelgeuse. The next ship was CO of USS Boulder LST 1190. I retired in 1989 after a 7 year tour as OPS/Security Officer of the World's Largest Naval Base, Norfolk, VA, with 36 years of service from Seaman Recruit to Captain.

Capt. Robert Jerns, USN (Ret)

Pawcatuck Pilot,

In July of 1952 we arrived by means of the USS Pawcatuck in the harbor of Golfe Juan, France. Soon after anchoring, Chief Walter Joyner

went for a little tour of the beach and upon returning to the ship, looked me up to tell me that the world famous Monte Carlo Automotive Road Race was to be run the very next day, which happened to be Sunday. Knowing that I had worked in the automotive parts business in Dallas, Texas, prior to being called up for Naval service, he probably figured that I would be interested. The Chief was to be on duty that Sunday, but I was not and most definitely interested in seeing that race. Dick Shellenbarger, a Fireman and fellow "snipe," overheard the discussion and said that he would like to join me.

We departed Sunday a.m. and made our way to the train station. The train was loaded and we had to stand all the way. Gladly, when we arrived at the Monte Carlo station and got off the train we could clearly hear automotive engines seemingly quite close. Not speaking French, we just followed people who seemed to know where they were going and soon discovered that the race was already on, that the train station itself was right on the planned route for the street race and that we had front row position for viewing it. Wow! Dick and I were enjoying the race and taking pictures. After a bit when the first dust cleared, we heard someone calling to us from above. There was a young couple out on a veranda a couple of stories up. We had ridden over on the same train together. They were motioning for us to come up. Again, we could not communicate in either French or English, but we understood that invitation and gladly accepted.

From our new elevated vantage point, we were able to view the race still better and get a view of much of the city. Those streets looked mighty narrow for racing from up there! We could see bales of hay that had been placed on corners and other strategic spots. Off in the distance we could see that part of the race route was high above the beach, Monte Carlo (being located in

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a mountainous area. Man, we thought that the prince would not have any better seats than we did. The young couple were very gracious and we attempted to express how much we appreciated their invitation and hospitality and what an unforgettable experience it had been.

After the race, Dick and I walked the streets sight-seeing and intended to visit the big Monte Carlo Casino, but learned that it is always closed on race day. You know about Cinderella liberty so we eventually headed back to the Pawcatuck and got in before midnight with our special memories.

It was good to renew acquaintance and reminisce a bit with Dick and several others who served on the Pawcatuck during the same time period. We regret that Dick and some others have passed on since then. But we hope to be able to attend the Jacksonville reunion in April this year and hope to see many of you then.

Marcus Anderson
Topside A Gang

Ms. Hoyle,

I was one of Pawcatuck's last OICs during the summer of 1991. My naval reserve unit was mobilized in August 1990 during Operation Desert Shield. We supported Military Sealift Command, Atlantic in Bayonne, NJ. It has been a small source of humor and embarrassment that I spent *the war* in that particular port-of-call made famous by Saturday Night Live.

Following Operation Desert Storm, I was asked to report to USNS PAWCATUCK (T-AO 108) and spent four rewarding months as the military detachments' officer-in-charge. One of my responsibilities was CMS Custodian (CMS is the acronym for crypto logical equipment). My assistant custodian was a Chief Petty Officer named "John Walker"—fortunately not THE John Walker who was safely behind bars at the time.

My memories of the time are varied. I am originally a submariner and was unfamiliar with underway replenishment, fleet operations and the ocean surface. I came up to speed quickly. The crew numbered about 110 civilians and 20 military. The MILDET was comprised of Signalmen, Radiomen, Operations Specialists and Electronics Technicians. I was impressed by the skill and professionalism of the civilian mariners and came away with deep respect for their seamanship.

The time for me was also somewhat cathartic. My first underway was an old fashion crossing from Virginia to the Azores to refuel and escort an ocean-going tug. I spent most evenings with one of the second mates and an able-bodied seaman playing Scrabble. The remainder of the summer was busier refueling naval vessels returning home from the Persian Gulf and participating in a fleet exercise for a small task force preparing for deployment. I was at-sea almost continuously during this four month assignment and would jump at an opportunity to repeat the experience.

For the crew, I was somewhat of an anomaly not only for my warfare specialty, but also for having reported aboard as a Lieutenant and being promoted to Lieutenant Commander while onboard. I believe the MSC OICs were generally younger Lieutenants.

Pawcatuck was a fine ship that provided excellent service. Her crew members have good cause to be proud of their contributions.

Harry Balian
Commander, USNR, Ret

Shipmates,

I was stationed on the USS Pawcatuck from 1971-1973. I was an ET so I was in the OPS Division. Soon after I settled in I became friends with a radar man RDSN Jones Gallagher. Whenever we were together it usually spelled trouble.

The Pawcatuck got orders to go on an operation that took us to Scotland, Spain and Portugal. As I recall, we

only had about 24 hours to get underway. One of our stops was a sub base in Holy Loch, Scotland. Jones and I went on liberty to the small Scottish town of Dunoon. At some point in time we met some young Scottish girls and hung out with them. At the end of the day we dropped them off at an orphanage where they worked.

Jones had this great idea to win the hearts of these Scottish girls. We would invite them and the orphans to visit the Pawcatuck. So on the way back to the ship, Jones said, "Let's go ask the Captain if they can visit the ship." I said, "Not now, it's 2 AM and the Captain's asleep." Jones said, "So, I'm going to ask him anyway." I was too frightened to wake the Captain in the middle of the night for such a hair-brained idea, so I hid in the ET shack. Jones knocked on the Captain's cabin and woke him up from a sound sleep. I could hear them talking, but couldn't make out the conversation. Jones came back to the ET shack and told me that the Captain said OK.

The girls we met, a head master and the orphans all got a tour of the ship and lunch. Jones said that the crew probably all hated us for bringing all those kids on board. I'm not sure if we ever saw the girls again plus the submariners (Bubble Heads as we called them) that were stationed at the base, told us to leave their girls alone, not that we would listen.

I have many photos of the ship and crew, but now that she is gone I would like to see more photos as I am sure many of you feel the same. I would like to start a photo library on CDs to make available to all.

I have a 35MM scanner that will scan black and white or color negatives and slides to my computer. I then use Photoshop to restore them, then put the pictures on a CD.

If anyone has any photos that they would like to contribute, they can send me negatives, slides or a CD of their pictures. I will add them to my collection and give you an up-

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dated CD for your collection. There is no charge and your materials will be returned to you with your updated CD. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Dan Phelps
627 Wring Dr
Tallmadge, OH 44278
330-633-2466

Dear David,

I was on board the Pawcatuck from the spring of 1962 until November 1963. I was an electronics technician 2nd class the whole time. Looking on your crew list, I recognized about five people I knew. We were on the Cuban Missile Crisis deployment and then to the Boston shipyard and refresher training at Guantanamo and then a Med cruise.

I am writing my recollections for the Veterans. Do you know where I could find a copy of our Mediterranean cruise deployment in the summer and fall of 1963 (ports of call, etc.)?

At the time of the jumboization, I was living in Akron, Ohio. I heard about the Pawcatuck being lengthened on the news and took a drive to Lorain and arrived as the ship was going down the channel and out into Lake Erie.

Following is an essay I wrote for the Veterans of Washington County, Marietta, OH that I will be recording for the National Archives.

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, 1962

In November 1962, I was an Electronics Technician 2nd Class on the USS Pawcatuck AO 108 stationed in Norfolk, VA. The ETs were responsible for all of the electronics on the ship. The ship was supposed to have six ETs; we had a 3rd class, a seaman who had not been to school but knew a little electronics, and myself. The USS Pawcatuck was a tanker that refueled ships at sea. We would rendezvous with ships when we

could find them, which sometimes took awhile and I would come under criticism saying, "Why can we hear them and can't see them?" But eventually we would get together and pretty soon we would have ships on both sides of us with hoses running over to them. Our job during refueling was to pay out a distance line that also contained a phone wire so the captains could tell how far apart the ships were, as well as being able to talk to one another, and we did this manually so when we fueled a lot of ships, we got a lot of upper-body exercise.

We left for Cuba some time in November 1962. My wife had joined me in Norfolk prior to this and was now seven months pregnant with our first child. Since we didn't know the outcome of this deployment, we decided that she should return home to PA with her parents to await the birth. With all of our worldly possessions, my wife drove to Winchester, VA where she met her parents and they continued on to PA. Our son was born in January of the following year.

Our ship was about the last to leave Norfolk because we had been undergoing repairs. Our captain was a fatherly figure, older than the other captains that I had served under. All captains are required to first command a tanker, a deep-draft non-combatant ship before they can command a deep-draft combatant ship, so we saw new captains quite frequently. On the way to Cuba, our captain told us that he did not know what we would encounter, but we would be prepared. He told us that he had been shot, torpedoed, and bombed at and we would do OK. He wore wings (aviator) as well as dolphins (submariner), so I guess he knew what he was talking about. The main thrust of the training was for everyone to get to their assigned station as quickly as possible day or night, so every night at some point, we would be awakened by general quarters (man your battle stations). You had to get dressed and get to your assigned station within three

minutes. My station was in the radio shack, which is located mid-ship and my sleeping compartment was in the stern.

When we got closer to Cuba, we were assigned a destroyer to be our escort (that following in our wake) since we had no Sonar to listen for submarines. We also didn't have air-search radar that would pick up aircraft and, of course, our guns were pretty much for show as far as defending the ship. We soon set about refueling all manner of ships. The aircraft carriers would come up on our port side (left side) and the destroyers that were their escorts would come up on the starboard one by one and we would top them off with black oil that they burned in their boilers. The carriers would receive black oil as well as jet fuel and aviation gasoline.

When we got low on fuel, we would refuel from MSTs tanker that was very similar to our ship except it didn't have hoses and it was manned by civilians. We would steam side by side with these ships for 8-10 hours filling back up. It was quite interesting to see these two tankers changing course while hooked together with the hoses. Most of this was done in the part of the gulf west of Jamaica.

Right after we finished fueling a carrier, I think it was the Independence, they started to launch planes. I didn't see it, but one of the guys hollered and I looked over towards the carrier and right in front of the ship there was a steam on top of the water. He said a plane had just gone into the water after it was launched. I think a destroyer stayed behind to hunt for the pilot, but I don't know what happened.

We were in the area of Cuba for approximately 30-40 days and during that time, we averaged 10 ships alongside a day. Some of the ships such as the LSTs (the ones that open in the front) ap-

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peared not to have ever fueled at sea. In some cases, we would have to send fittings over by high line to mate with our hoses. We also fueled APAs (troop carriers) that were loaded with soldiers and marines.

By the middle of December, we had returned to Norfolk. January, February and March our ship was in drydock in Boston. In April we underwent training at Guantanamo, from May-November, a Mediterranean cruise and when we returned, I was discharged. Hallelujah!

John W. Mitchell

Shipmates,

I was handling a detail that involved securing the ship with heavy roping during a severe storm. The storm caused a freighter to sink while anchored in the water near the port in Spain where we were tied to a pier. All the men on the ship were awakened and assigned details in the middle of the night. None of us got any sleep that night!

Does anyone remember the port we were in?

Donald Wilson (1958-61)
Edna_wilson@sbcglobal.net

Pawcatuck Pilot,

On August 19, 1972, we took the Pawcatuck into Kristiansund, Norway (not Kristiansand). I have attached the "materials" we released with some pictures. It was a great place to be as in WWII the Nazi's bombed the city and then the U.S. bombed it again. We helped them rebuild and we were very well received.

Bill Emery

KRISTIANSUND NORWAY 19 AUG 72

The Norwegian minister of Defense, Mr. Als Jakob Fostervoll, was today officially welcomed aboard the USS PAWCATUCK (AO-108) in Kristiansund, Norway.

Minister Fostervoll, a former high school principal and local Labor Party politician from Kristiansund, has been Minister of Defense since March of 1971. The Minister is only 39 years old, having attained this important position while still a freshman Senator in the Norwegian Parliament.

Kristiansund is on the west coast of Norway, about 85 miles southwest of Trondheim, and has a population of over twenty five thousand. The city is divided among four picturesque islands which enclose a fine harbor and is a leading center for trawling and for the processing and exporting of fish. Ship building and wood products are also important industries.

PAWCATUCK, a Mayport based JUMBO Fleet Oiler, is the largest vessel to visit Kristiansund. Her Commanding Officer is CDR S.C. BELECHAK, USN. The Norwegians were extremely friendly and hospitable to PAWCATUCK and her crew, with over one thousand people visiting the ship.

Ashore the American sailors found the Norwegians warm and sincere in their efforts to entertain and get to know their ally in NATO. Minister Fostervoll hosted the PAWCATUCK wardroom at a magnificent dinner in the Grand Hotel and the entire crew found the shopping, scenery, people and night life genuinely enjoyable.

As with all good things PAWCATUCK's port call to Kristiansund passed all too quickly. The goodwill shared by Americans and Norwegians was highlighted when pictures and articles concerning PAWCATUCK appeared on the front pages of both local newspapers. Bidding Kristiansund farewell, PAWCATUCK put out to sea to rejoin ASW GROUP FOUR and other NATO Forces in continued operations in the North Atlantic.

KRISTIANDSUND, NORWAY 19 August 1972

The USS PAWCATUCK (AO-108) was honored today by an official visit from the Norwegian Min-

ister of Defense, Alf Jakob Fostervoll at Kristiansund, Norway, the Minister's home town. Side honors were rendered including eight sideboys. Minister Fostervoll was guest of honor at a luncheon on board given by the Commanding Officer of PAWCATUCK, CDR S.C. BELECHAK, USN. Other guests included the Assistant Military Attaché to Norway, CDR M.L. McCutchan, USN and the Mayor of Kristiansund, Asbjorn Jordall.

This Mayport based JUMBO Fleet Oiler is the largest vessel to have visited Kristiansund, a busy fishing port on the west coast of Norway. PAWCATUCK, operating with ASW GROUP FOUR and other NATO forces in the North Atlantic, entertained over a thousand Norwegians during open visiting in Kristiansund.

The Norwegians and the PAWCATUCK crew thoroughly enjoyed their three day visit together in the Norwegian Island city. The goodwill and friendship of the port visit was manifested in front page pictures and articles concerning PAWCATUCK in both local papers. All too soon PAWCATUCK bid farewell to her new found Norwegian friends and put out to sea to resume operations.

LTJG W.D. Emery, USN
USS PAWCATUCK (AO-108)



**Picture of Kristiansund,
Norway**

More pictures can be found on page nine on the internet version of the Pawcatuck Pilot. We did not have room in the paper copy to print them. Go to www.mlrsinc.com/pawcatuck.

Nicholas Lee has sent us several letters from the Captain to the families of the Pawcatuck crew from 1963. We will use these letters in this and future issues. Thank you to Mr. Lee for sending in the letters.

11 July 1963

Dear Member of PAWCATUCK'S Family:

I consider it a privilege to be able to take a few minutes from a busy day to sit and talk informally with you. Since taking command of PAWCATUCK, I have become quite well acquainted with the crew, and from time to time, in my monthly letters, I will pass on to you news of our activities which we hope will be of some interest to you.

I feel that as a parent or wife of one of our crew, you may be interested in a brief history, and small insight into the mission and capabilities of this vessel, and the part in which your son or husband plays. The USS PAWCATUCK is 553 feet of liquid cargo. Completed in March 1946 by the Sun Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, at Chester, Pennsylvania, she was commissioned in the Naval Service 10 May 1946 at Philadelphia. Other interesting characteristics of this ship are: Beam-across— 75 feet 4 inches. Her maximum draft is 32 feet 4½ inches, her displacement 25,490 tons. Maximum black oil capacity-104,706 barrels; maximum jet fuel capacity (JP-5): 17,432 barrels; maximum aviation gasoline (Av-Gas): 7,000 barrels. The accommodations provided in this ship are as follows: 20 Officers, 18 Chief Petty Officers and 272 Enlisted men. At this writing there are 18 Officers, 9 Chief Petty Officers and 219 Enlisted men.

The usual fueling method is called the "Spanwire" method. In this method, a wire about ¾ inch in thickness is used to support the rigs or fuel hoses. The Spanwire is pulled to the receiving ship and

attached to a stable object on the bulkhead called a pad eye. The hose is then pulled across on wheels called trolleys. When the hose is across, the "service attendant" aboard this floating "gas station" begin filling the receiving ship up.

The PAWCATUCK has taken part in many crises such as the Lebanon Crisis and the Cuban Blockade of November 1962. Every two years since 1948, the PAW has been making her Mediterranean Cruises. In the winter of 1961-62 she made a three month NATO Cruise to the north Atlantic.

To be continued in future issues.

If any of the stories in this issue jog your memory, let us hear from you for the next issue!

**PAWCATUCK
2007 REUNION**

**JACKSONVILLE,
FL**

APRIL 15-18

SEA TURTLE INN

SPRING/SUMMER 1952 CRUISE JOURNAL USS PAWCATUCK

Continued from the last issue

St. Peter and St. Paul happen to be the patron Saints of Naples and the Neapolitans observe their holiday. So it was that on the 27th of June the ship was full dressed, which involved the combined efforts of all the QM and Radar gang personnel which could be spared for the job of rigging the special "haul downs" and lashing every flag in the bag on the five spans which were required to dress the Paw from fantail to forecandle. Executing colors on the holiday required the additional help of the deck force for a smooth performance. The novelty of dressing the ship soon wore off however, because on the 4th of July, ship was dressed again and on Bastille Day on the Riviera, the height of exasperation was reached.

Repairs were being made by the Shenandoah on our station #4 boom which had been damaged by the Destroyer "Braine" in a routine at anchor fueling operation. Schedules called for our picking up the repaired boom from the Shenandoah in Cannes on Bastille Day. Since the ship underway is never "Dressed"

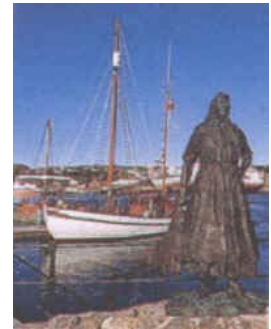
the QM gang called upon its resourcefulness and commandeered the Supply Division personnel to execute colors and stand the sea and anchor detail watches which were involved six times. A sigh of relief was breathed when it was learned that the Greeks didn't have any holiday on their calendar during our brief visit to Phaleron Bay.

While in Greece, nightly displays of searchlights broke the monotony of a QM in-port-watch with the entire Sixth Fleet joining in the criss-crossing shafts of light sweeping the skies over the bay. Notice was served to those who could see and to those farther to the N.E. who would hear about it, that the U.S. Navy was present in Phaleron Bay. Possibly the jets being warmed up on the flight deck of the Wasp with the roar that could be heard all the eight miles to Athens may have been a more impressive show of power, but the searchlight exercises were our contribution to the display of strength, and we did this as conscientiously as we could.

To be continued in future issues.



Orphans from Kristiansund visit the Pawcatuck



Pictures of Kristiansund, Norway