

PAWCATUCK PILOT

Volume 11 Issue 3

December 2002

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS PAWCATUCK AO-108



Special Points of Interest

- David Willis tells the story of another ship's reunion that he visited. See his comments in the cover story.
- Twelve new names for the roster are in the WEL-COME MAT on page three.
- A reader asked for more from Thomas Blood and we delivered. Read Thomas Blood's "Memoirs of a Snipe.." starting on page four.
- See if the names mentioned in the 1952 Cruise Book about the Deck Force are some of your old buddies. See pages five and six.

WILLIS' WORDS OF WISDOM

Dear Shipmates and Families,

Happy Holidays to all of you and your families. We out here in Arizona wish each and everyone of you the happiest of holidays and may it be a good year for all of you in 2003.

Since we last met in June of this year at our tenth annual reunion, we have gained twenty-one new shipmates. In four more months it will be time for the next reunion, and I hope many more will attend next year. I know there have been some changes, but that was explained in the last newslet-

ter. So please plan on attending next year, as there may be some big changes.

Last August Jan and I went to Colorado Springs, CO. This was all paid for by the Convention and Tourist Bureau. This was planned the first part of the year. I was asked about going by Larry Eckard from MLRS. I wish now that we had not changed for 2003. We can still bring it up. We were there from Saturday until Thursday morning and we saw a lot of the area. Of course, we all know we can only see so much on any city we go to. Think about it for 2005. Then we also

went to Jacksonville, FL, on the 31st of October to the 4th of November. We had a great time and would favor Jacksonville for 2004. That is only my feelings and the prices were in our range that we have paid in the past.

Three weeks ago I picked up two gentlemen at the airport who came out here for the first reunion of the USS Hassayampa AO-145. That is the name of the river that goes through Wickenburg, Arizona. Wickenburg is about 30 miles from where we live here in the Phoenix area.

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They were both from North Carolina. One of them had called me about a month before and I said I would pick them up at the airport. This being the first reunion, they had just over one hundred attend and picked Wickenburg again for next year. On the way up, the two of them said they would probably not remember anybody. Well, as soon as we walked into the lobby of the Best Western, right away it was like many of our reunions. You think you will not know anybody, but as soon as you see them or the name tag, it all comes back. It was a joy to see shipmates get together again. I then picked them up on Sunday morning and took them back to the airport. They do their own reunion and each is responsible for calling in the reservations to the hotel.

Last year in Charleston I told everyone in attendance that if you would let me know if you were flying in, I would see that you were picked up and returned to the airport. Some of you did not tell me you were flying in, and therefore since I was not informed, I am sorry if you had to pay for your transportation to and from the airport. Some even said they were flying into another city and driving from that city. Shipmates, if we work together we can make each reunion work to everybody's advantage.

On another note, at this year's reunion we held our memorial service on Saturday evening before the banquet. I would like to know the following:

- Do you still want the memorial service on Sunday morning as it was in other years, or do you want to have it on Saturday night before the banquet?
- Do you want to dress casually for the banquet as we did this year, or dress up as in the past?

Please let MLRS know about these above items so they can plan at their end.

Until next year, again I wish you all a Happy Holiday Season and that we all have a good new year.

Yours,
David Willis, Reunion Coordinator for the USS Pawcatuck AO-108

Life and times on the USS Pawcatuck AO 108, as seen by a snipe. (1945 to 1950)

THE ENGINEER'S LAMENT

What, you ask is life at sea?
Speak to a seaman, not to me.
A dial, a gauge, and nothing more..
Except perhaps, an engine roar.
No sunset turning the ocean red,
Just bed to watch and watch to bed.
No deep and rolling ocean swell,
Just dirty stinking diesel smell.
No watching the bow turn the ocean boil,
Just temperature, pressure, vacuums and oil.
No thought of how neat and trim your craft,
Just count the turns and check your shaft.
No fresh sea air to salt your blood,
Just a cigarette and a cup of mud.
If you want to go to sea, then lend an ear;
Don't let them make you an engineer.

*Author unknown, Copied from bulletin board, USS Pawcatuck (AO-108) 1947
Submitted by Thomas Blood.*

Financial Statement

Balance after 09/02 issue
\$249.42
Funds received since 09/02
\$540.00
Funds available for 12/02
\$789.42
Funds used for 12/02 issue
\$337.05
Balance remaining **\$452.37**

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER.
YOUR \$5.00 CAN KEEP IT COMING EACH QUARTER.**

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.

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

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:

Jim Kistler SF1/c R Div (1966-68)
PO Box 265
Flat Rock, NC 28731
828-697-4233
kistfam@aol.com

Thomas Turner MM3 (1969-71)
505 Woodland Ave
Chattanooga, TN 37405
423-266-4935

Doyle Wheeler SN (1952-56)
255 Smith Rd
Searcy, AK 72143
501-268-6636

Clifford Dunham SN (1961-63)
56 Blaine Ct
Bay Point, CA 94565
925-458-9030

Robert Watson ETR3 (1973-74)
228 Dresser Hill Rd
Dudley, MA 01571
508-949-1481
robertwwatson829@hotmail.com

Richard Dobbyn (1984-86)
164 Joe English Rd
New Boston, NH 03070
603-487-3033

William Guy, Jr. (1965-67)
700 SW St. Lucie Crescent
Stuart, FL 34994
772-287-4106

Patrick Cusack LTJG (1955)
4108 Fanfol Dr
Phoenix, AZ 85028-5106
602-996-4213

Rudolph Notaro RM (1949-51)
702 Olivia Dr

Williamston, NJ 08094

Anthony Madia
1194 Cielo Cir
Rohnert Park, CA 94928
707-795-7379
rangershky@aol.com

Lawton Grant
3271 Bay Ridge Way
Port Charlotte, FL 33953

Edward Shinkle MM (1957-60)
1420 Zimmerer Rd
Williamsburg, OH 45176
513-724-7733



TAPS

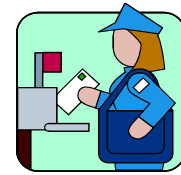
The Pawcatuck Pilot has learned of the following deaths since the last newsletter. Our deepest sympathy goes to the widows, families and friends of the deceased. Anyone who knows or learns of a shipmate's death, you are requested to notify the newsletter so that person can be listed in TAPS and also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

Gary Doty
EM2 Eng Div (1950-53)
Died Sept. 14, 2002

Joseph Hunt
S1/c 1st Div (1946-47)
Died June 20, 2002

George Miller
EN1 (1972-74)
Died May 28, 2002

Joseph Devinney
ETCA (1950-52)
Date of death not known



MAIL CALL

Shipmates,

Some of you remember Gary Doty. I think the last reunion he was at was Lancaster, PA. Please send a card if you so desire. Thanks. Got the notice from Tom Pollard.

Their address is:

Mrs. Gary Doty
5550 W. Nevada Dr
W Terre Haute, IN 47885

David Willis

From the Tribune Star Newspaper

Gary Austin Doty

Gary Austin Doty, 69, of West Terre Haute died at 3:33 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 14, 2002, in his residence. He retired as owner of Commercial Radio Service in 1985. He was born Oct. 22, 1932, in Brazil to Robert E. Doty and Adah L. Strain Doty. Survivors include his wife of 48 years, Mary C. Bailey Doty; two daughters and sons-in-law, Shari and Don Pomeroy of Brazil and Terry and Randy Bedwell of West Terre Haute; one son and daughter-in-law, Gary Christopher and Stephanie Sue Doty of West Terre Haute; stepmother Betty Doty of Terre Haute; one sister and brother-in-law, Nola Jane and Walter Blueher of Seelyville; two brothers and sisters-in-law, Grant and Becky Doty of Sullivan and Tim and Anne Doty of West Terre Haute; one sister-in-law, Alice Dix and husband Wayne of Fairbanks; several nieces and nephews; and his trusty companion Rusty. He served in the U.S. Navy aboard the USS Pawcatuck during the Korean War. He was a 45 year mem-

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ber of the Wabash Valley Amateur Radio Association with his call letters K9IKQ. He also was a member of the Quarter Century Wireless Association. There will be no services or visitation. Cremation is scheduled. Graveside service is at a later date. If friends so desire, memorial contributions may be made to the American Brain Tumor Association, Hux Cancer Center or Hospice of the Wabash Valley.

Pawcatuck Pilot,

Enclosed is my check to help keep the Pilot going—to me the newsletters are a lot of interest. I regret not making any of the reunions due to my wife's health. I'm for keeping the reunions going. My best to the Pilot. All the letters are a lot of interest to us all.

God Bless,
Harry Fox
118 Winegar Dr
Ontario, OR 97914-3137

P.S. We got to keep Tom Blood's letters published!

We certainly will keep Mr. Blood's work published. Here is another one of his contributions.

IT'S TIME TO PAY RENT, AGAIN

Freedom is not free!
Freedom has to be fought for and won!
Freedom, like rent, has to be paid for, forever!
Freedom sometimes extracts a high price of it's citizens in sacrifices.
Freedom will always be challenged by those who do not want others to be free.

Americans have paid a high price for freedom since the founding of our country, and not only for our own freedom, but for the freedom of others.

Freedom has become such a threat to those who would rule the world according to their distorted view, that they would contort and warp their own religion in order to deceive and mislead those they would control.

Not only have they threatened freedom in the rest of the world, but thrust a dagger in the back of millions of innocent civilians who wanted nothing more than their freedom.

We are like the Hydra of ancient Greece,
but no firebrand will subdue us.
Our nation is not a sleeping lion, but a beast, which when aroused, will make retribution of such past acts pale by comparison.

I don't know about heaven other than what I've been told.
But I do know if there is a hell, there is a special place there for those who are responsible for committing this horrendously barbaric act,
let's send them there, post haste.

We are the mother guarding her offspring; freedom

It is time to pay the rent,
the bill for freedom.

By: Thomas Blood CWO4
USN/USCG Retired

MEMOIRS OF A SNIPE ABOARD USS PAWCATUCK AO 108

1945 TO 1950

By Thomas Blood

The Phantom Barking Dog & the Great Horned Owl

Another time in Goose Bay, Labrador and Argentia, Newfoundland, when the crew was ashore for "near beer" and baseball, seems they found a Husky tied up and decided it would make a good mascot. Without asking permission from the dog's owner, or the Captain, they smuggled the dog aboard and housed him in one of the midship deck gear

lockers. The Captain heard the dog barking and sent his first Lt. looking for it. Once found, back ashore it went and the guilty party had some tall explaining to do.

A few days later we headed back out to sea and I noticed the Captain pacing the starboard wing of the bridge. I was on my way to the IC room on some routine task or maybe looking for Klink, the IC man, to discuss some earth shaking discovery when one of those moments of inspiration that crosses a mind in high mischief gear flashed across my frontal lobes. (Having lived in Florida and spending a lot of time in the swamps and on the river, I learned to call 'Gators by barking like a dog. I got pretty good at it, too. The end result was more unpredictable than not and hazardous.) Anyway, I'm walking into midships quarters and just before passing out of view, I let out a couple of good ones, Arf! Arfs that is. I repeated this a couple of days, at the safest opportunity, of course. I'm keeping my own counsel, and with the philosophy that a secret is only a secret if one person knows it, especially aboard ship.

Sure enough a day later the First Lieutenant (today known as "Rat Fink") was out looking in every conceivable nook and cranny, appearing when most unexpected. This must have irritated him somewhat as it cut into his cherished brown nose time. Then there was the fact that a great white horned owl appeared on the yard arm one morning and accompanied us for a few days out to sea, which of course lead to all kinds of metaphysical speculations. I was not after the Captain, but the First Lt. was everyone's hate figure, even engineering. As for me, it was another "Gotcha" under my belt.

I'm not sure if this is the same Lt., but new to the ways of ships and the sea he was. We were having personal inspection all in whites, when the boiler room called the bridge and wanted permission to blow tubes. (A process in which you take live steam and blow the soot off

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the boiler tubes.) Permission was granted, only problem was, we were on the cargo deck and the wind was coming aft to forward. Now this stuff is not only black AND oily, but there is lots of it, enough to leave a streak over a mile long. I don't think we would have minded as much if we could have heard the words of counseling and fatherly advice the Captain must have given the OOD.

Liberty, and Real Life

One thing about being in the auxiliary fleet, we went a lot of places the rest of the fleet never went. We seldom were in the same port as the main fleet which was fine by us. Out of 180 men peace time complement, possible 1/3 rated liberty and only a small percentage of them would go ashore. There weren't enough of us for the locals to bother raising their prices. We always had a shipmate who would keep silent and give us the high sign if we were being shafted. Naples was a great port as was Athens, but Tangier was my favorite. This part of the world had just gotten out of a war and were pretty bad off. Makes you appreciate what a sheltered life we lead.

Tangier was a good example. I had a SP a couple of days there and when I reported in to the local police station, it was in the room where they interrogated prisoners. Hung up around the wall, where we would normally hang plates or pictures, were thumbs and hands of convicted thieves, and this was in one of the international cross road cities of that part of the world.

Another time while in French Morocco and I was on shore patrol, the local Gendarmes took me on a patrol of the local places not to be. There was essentially a walled city called the Old Medina in which the French had 3,500 "street walkers" from the surrounding area locked up. They were not behind bars, but not allowed to leave the city, until they had received some training (hygiene health etc) passed a physical, and received a license. People

were constantly streaming in and out of the gate, all men, and as we approached within 10 feet or so, 4 of the residents came at my guide (guard) tooth and claw, screaming at the top of their voices in any one of 7 languages. It looked for all the world like someone opening the door on a cage of angry bobcats that were particularly angry at their keeper.

You Think We Have a Police Problem?

Apparently this was not unexpected on the Gendarmes' part, for with a swift jab and swing of his baton and a well placed boot to the buttocks of one of the unlucky ladies who must have flown 5 feet, they then disappeared inside. The recipient of the boot got up rubbing her rear muttering something, and was apparently not accustomed to such treatment. Boy, wouldn't some of our ambulance chasers have a field day over there. After we got inside, the French officer explained the purpose of the place. The Old Medina was a city in every sense, with shops, stores and industry. The primary purpose was to take these women off the streets and if possible teach them a trade, educate them as far as possible, and at least if they fell back on their old profession, to teach them how to take care of themselves health-wise. From what I observed, the physical side of taking care of themselves they had down pat.

Don't Go to Town Son, or at Least Leave Your Gun at Home

The next day after returning to the ship, I was telling some of the crew of what I observed, the undulating music, various crafted items in the shops, open air markets with sides of camel carcass hanging in the open air. A buyer would point to the section he wanted and the butcher would brush the flies away and slice off the indicated piece. The narrow streets had only room enough for 2 people to walk side

by side. If you had to relieve yourself, there was just a plain hole in the street, but in the busier part of town they would have an elevated screen for this hole in the ground. I'm not sure, but I don't think they had toilet paper, the cleaner of the lot had a bottle of holy water. Their judicial system of course was entirely foreign to us. The practice of cutting off one's right hand for theft had double impact. One, they would be known as a thief wherever they went and were at the complete mercy of charity, and 2, they would never use their left hand to eat with, as it was considered unclean. So when they ate, they would have to eat like a dog.

If you fool around be prepared to pay the price.

Some of the more randy of the crew decided this was the place to party. The next day if they had been in better shape they would have thrown me over the side. It seems the minute they passed through the gate they were literally drug off the street and the women had their way with them. A clean American sailor was quite a change from their normal customer. I don't know what the going rate was for their services, but those who participated were quiet for a long time, maybe waiting for any incubation period to expire.

The following is taken from the "Spring/Summer 1952 Cruise Journal USS Pawcatuck"

DECK FORCE

The plan of the day for Monday 21 April 1952 reported that at 1600 the USS Pawcatuck (AO-108) would weigh anchor for the last time in the United States for about four months and chart a course for the Mediterranean Sea. However, plans were changed and one more liberty was granted in Norfolk, Virginia, before shoving off at 1830 Tuesday 22 April. Thus, a period of fueling at sea, drills, general quarters and liberty in foreign ports commenced. Heading

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up the Deck Department was Lieutenant G. P. Robinson, First Lieutenant with division officers being Bos'n Knapp and Ensign McHugh for the First and Second Divisions respectively. Quiet spoken Chief Boatswain's Mate Richard Nenow had the position of most responsible petty officer, and riding herd on the seaman and third class boatswain's mates were Jim Lassiter and Buck "don't let his size fool you" Buchanan. With those well trained and well qualified persons as leaders, the men of the deck force were in for much wirebrushing, painting, fueling at sea, early reveilles, and a few holiday routines that didn't turn out to be all holiday, considering the fact that once in a while a ship had to be fueled before it was possible for the men to be at their leisure. However, it was not all work and no play. There were plenty of chances for relaxation and recreation. Several weekends of undisturbed holiday routine were afforded and a lot of early liberties granted during the cruise. There were also numerous tours of places of interest, ranging from a half day tour of Pompeii to the five day leave tour to Paris. Then, of course, the movies on the cargo deck with plenty of room for all, except perhaps when the 180 passengers were aboard between Naples and Golfe Juan, but that was for only two nights and one day. Seats at the movie ranged from a blanket spread on the deck to the Captain's chair with the white cloth covering. One of the most outstanding was Fred Baumann's own private boxcrate with room for two, and painted on each side "Baumann and guest." This contraption was always in the front row.

The Deck Department crew's berthing space is located amidships, forward of the after well deck. This compartment was kept neat as a pin throughout the trip by Johnny Wells, who, very nautical like, when addressed by shipmates—never failed to reply "Wells, Aye"—even if he was asked only the time of day. Johnny was in the U.S. Army during

the second world war. Captain of the head was Winfree—Urial Joyner Winfree. Wonder how many of his shipmates knew his first name?

The personnel of the Deck Department were from many places and of various temperaments, and as the men live together as closely as it is necessary on a ship, even one the size of the Pawcatuck, the various traits and characteristics make themselves known. For instance, there was Willie Mesko, the Pittsburgh Pulverizer, a real racketeer. "Sam", as he was also known, was very interested in making the third class Personnelman rate. Sam kept making funny scratchings all over everything in the First Lieutenant's office and there began to be a question of sanity until someone discovered it was shorthand.

.....

To be continued in the next issue.

If any of these names, places or events bring back some memories for you, please let us know so we can print what you remember about them in the next issue. One story idea that came to mind as I read about the liberty stories is to tell us about your favorite liberty port or about something unusual that happened or that you observed while on liberty in a foreign port. Everyone loves hearing from the readers. Please contribute your story.

COMPLETE AND MAIL TO:

**ML&RS, Inc
P.O. Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603**

I prefer the memorial service at the reunion to be on
 Saturday night
 Sunday morning

I prefer the dress for the banquet to be
 casual
 "Sunday" dress

My favorite liberty port was
 _____.

PILOT AVAILABLE ON LINE

The Pawcatuck Pilot is now available to download from the Military Locator & Reunion Service Inc web site.

If you are able to visit our web site and download the Newsletter, and therefore do **not** need a **paper copy** mailed to you, please let us know.

Please visit our web site at www.mlrsinc.com, then follow the link labeled Reunions, then scroll down until you see the listing for the Pawcatuck. Click on the button labeled Newsletters, and in a few minutes the newsletter should appear on your screen. (This will only work if you have Adobe Reader 4.0 or higher.) You can also download this viewer for free from our web site.

If you would like to receive all future mailings from us in this method, please send an e-mail requesting to subscribe to the Pawcatuck E-mail Roster. We will send you an e-mail each time, informing you something new is available on the web site. **Please let us know if your e-mail address changes so you don't miss any important information.**

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Dina Coffey

**USS PAWCATUCK REUNION
APRIL 24-27, 2003
HICKORY, NC
PARK INN HOTEL**

Registration Packets will be sent out shortly after the first of the year.

MESSAGE TO 2003 REUNION ATTENDEES

Ralph Jordan suggested everyone photo copy a picture of "the way you were onboard ship," and wear it with your nametag at the next reunion. Some of you have changed a little bit, and this would make you easier to recognize and remember!