

THE PURDY REPORT

Volume 19, Issue 1

June 2009

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS PURDY DD-734



Special Points of Interest

- **Read about all that happened at the 2009 reunion in Philadelphia in the cover story. More about it follows in the President's Message and the Chaplain's report. See pages 3 & 5.**
- **There's Purdy merchandise for sale! See page four for details.**
- **Robert Johnson shares a tale about the Purdy posing as a Russian ship. It begins on page five.**
- **What was your most interesting assignment in the Navy? See what others had to say beginning on page six.**
- **Read about Savannah's attractions on pages 7 & 8. Send back the survey on page 8 for the 2010 reunion.**

2009 USS PURDY REUNION REPORT

The 2009 annual USS Purdy (DD-734) reunion was held in Philadelphia, PA, with a total of 98 persons in attendance. Fifty-three of those were former sailors on the Purdy and forty-five attended as guests. The Ramada Inn served as the host facility for the April 15-19, 2009 reunion.

Wednesday was the official opening date for registration, hospitality room opening and the evening Welcome Reception. Registration began midday, coinciding with the opening of the hospitality room which was open for snacks, coffee and soft drinks during the entire reunion. Here memorabilia could be displayed, which

became the stimulus for many memories and reminiscing about the "good ole days." The Welcome Reception was held at 5:00 pm and was the first official gathering of the entire group of attendees. It offered a good spread of hors d'oeuvres and drinks and was a relaxing way to spend the late afternoon. This day provided plenty of time for everyone to meet and greet old friends and any new comers to the reunion and still have time to relax and rest up for the upcoming activities of the entire reunion.

Wednesday's weather had been wet, windy and cold, but Thursday turned out to be a beautiful sunny day, just what was ordered

for a day of site seeing in Philadelphia. At 8:30 am the Historic Philadelphia tour left the hotel and made its way to explore the Battleship USS New Jersey. The "Big J" was launched in December 1942 and served the country for 48 years, becoming the most decorated ship in US history, having received 16 battle stars and 13 additional citations, medals and ribbons. This visit was a highlight of the day for the Navy veterans. The tour also passed many of Philadelphia's cultural/commercial sites including a drive along Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the "Champs Elysses" of

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America", and a brief stop in front of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where some of the group ran up "Rocky's stairs" for a great view of Philadelphia's skyline. After lunch the group went on to "America's Most Historic Square Mile." History came alive with visits or pass-bys of Independence Hall, Congress Hall, the Liberty Bell and Christ Church. The tour of Christ Church was a particularly favorite part of the tour. It is considered one of the nation's most beautiful surviving 18th-century structures, a monument to colonial craftsmanship and a handsome example of Georgian architecture. The baptismal font in which William Penn was baptized is still in use. The congregation's members included 15 signers of the Declaration of Independence and Revolutionary War leaders George Washington, Robert Morris, Benjamin Franklin and Betsy Ross. The weary, but happy crew returned to the Ramada Inn around 4:30 pm and were ready for some refreshments in the hospitality room and then some much needed rest before the evening's activities. But by 6:00 pm everyone was back together and ready for the evening buffet featuring "a taste of Italy." Italian favorites included salads, linguine with clam sauce, beef filled ravioli and much more! It had been a full day of activities, but many of the group didn't want it to end just yet and so they retired to the hospitality room for more conversation and story telling. As the night grew later, even those die-hards gave in and said good night and got some much needed rest in preparation for another full day of touring.

Friday dawned again with sunny skies and warm temperatures, and after the breakfast buffet the group again headed off for some site seeing. Valley Forge National Park was today's destination, and it was again one filled with American history. No other place associated with the American Revolution symbolizes the suffering, sacrifice, and ultimate triumph of the soldier than Valley

Forge. No battle was fought here, but there was survival against other enemies—low morale due to losses at Brandywine and Germantown, the British capture and occupation of Philadelphia, hunger, disease, and the forces of nature. The visit began with a viewing of the film "Valley Forge—A Winter Encampment" in the Welcome Center. Then the drive through the 3,500 acres occupied by the soldiers allowed everyone to see authentically reconstructed huts (occupied by the soldiers during the 1777-78 winter), earthen fortifications and a working example of a field of "bake-oven." The narrated ride made everyone sense that they were there, reliving the events along with the soldiers. After the tour of Valley Forge, the group returned to the hotel in time for a late lunch of one's choosing. The remainder of the day was free to relax, share memories and then choose a nighttime activity with friends.

Saturday was a leisure day with no planned activities until the afternoon business meeting. Many chose to sleep in a bit and then explore Philadelphia's sites with friends, or some just stayed at the hotel and enjoyed being with others in the hospitality room. At 3:00 pm the annual business meeting was held to decide on the future leadership and reunion location. Larry DiPasquale was again selected as president of the association and Savannah, GA as the 2010 reunion site. Everyone was urged to contact their missing buddies from the Purdy and encourage them to attend the Savannah reunion. The next scheduled event was the pre-dinner cocktail hour at 6:30 pm. Photos were taken for inclusion in the post-reunion Memory Book, and everyone enjoyed their favorite drink as well as greeting those who came for the banquet only. Then at 7:30 pm the USS Purdy DD-734 banquet began with the Pledge of Allegiance, the National Anthem and the invocation by Fred Harrington. Larry DiPasquale welcomed everyone to the banquet and then dinner was served. Following dinner everyone enjoyed the music of the 40s, 50s, 60s and

70s by the DJ and some even showed off their dancing moves. It was an enjoyable evening for all and a good way to end the day.

Sunday morning breakfast and Memorial Service were the last events of the reunion. Everyone enjoyed the private breakfast buffet and chatting with friends for the last time until next year. Following breakfast Fred Harrington led the Memorial Service which paid tribute to all the USS Purdy shipmates who have passed away, especially those since the last reunion. Assisting Chaplain Harrington were John Mustakos, Kenneth Petit, Larry Sharp and Barney Strutton. Names of the deceased were read and a bell was tolled for each. Those remembered were as follows:
Killed in Action April 13, 1945—Thomas Bradbury, James Breckenridge, Howard Canada, John Curran, Charles English, Edward Gorvers, Richard Havner, Andrew Kakalecz, William Kellerman, Irving Korsch, John Pieluck, Orville Putman, Arthur Sprengel, and Walter Swensen.
Known to have died or whose death was learned of since the 2008 reunion—Laird Cornell, Anthony De Carlo, Michael Dynko, David Gibbons, William Harris, William Hensinget, Theron Jackman, Patrick McMullen, George Mitchell, Donald Mynes, George Runkle, Lester Savage, Kenneth Scott, Guy Teetsel, Leo Emery, Darrel Stanton and Robert Whipple. Following the Memorial Service it was time for good byes, handshakes and hugs. Everyone is hoping for a great turnout in Savannah, GA for 2010 because it is a beautiful, historic and one of America's must-see cities. Hope to see many of you there.

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

A MESSAGE FROM THE PREZ

Hi again shipmates and all Purdy ladies and friends. Our Philadelphia reunion is now history, and I'm sure that all who attended will agree that it was one of the best. Almost one hundred attended; the hotel and tours were great; and a special "THANKS" to our ML&RS, reps Pat and Morris Miller for the outstanding job they did for us. Some of you didn't care for the buffet style dinner at the banquet. I will take the blame for this since I gave Larry at ML&RS the OK for the buffet. I promise that there will be no more buffets at our banquets. I want to thank all at the reunion business meeting for their vote of confidence and reelection of VP Bill Dow, Sec/Treas Jim Meechan and myself as your association officers for another year. I also want to thank Bill and Jim for all their help during the past year, and also thank Chaplain Fred and MAA Steve for staying on for another year in those positions. During the reunion I mentioned to only a few that I was having some heart problems. Well, I'm glad to report that those problems are behind me, and that I will be able to stay on as your Prez for awhile longer. I was in the hospital May 29th and 30th to have two stents installed to open blockages in my heart and the procedure was a success.

Also, at the business meeting, the site for the 2010 reunion was selected, and will be in Savannah, GA. The dates and hotel have not been set at the time of this writing, but count on being in Savannah in April or May 2010. Brenda at ML&RS is looking for a hotel in or near the downtown/historic area, but tells me that area will be slightly more costly than past reunion sites. I told her that despite the higher cost, staying in the downtown area would be preferable to staying at a lower cost out-of-town hotel, and needing to drive or use taxis to get to the downtown area where all the sightseeing and restaurants are located.

On a slightly humorous note (I'm sure Chaplain Fred Harrington won't appreciate this), while on a tour of historic Philly, and while waiting in line to get into the Liberty Bell shrine, Fred got bombed. Seems that a crazed, Kamikaze pigeon took aim, and got a direct hit on our Chaplain. Someone mentioned that was a good luck sign. Fred said, "For whom, me or the pigeon?" My opinion was that the pigeon was an atheist and didn't like chaplains.

VP Bill Dow tells me that he still has some Purdy ballcaps, shirts and jackets left and has a source to acquire more if needed. If you would like to order any of these high quality items, give Bill a call at 860-426-1278 or 860-922-1788 for prices and shipping information.

Now about our annual dues. I was against this, but the majority of the members at the reunion business meeting agreed to amend Article 2 of our constitution to change the annual dues to \$10.00 starting January 1, 2010. My reasons for disagreeing are that our treasury is still solvent, and out of over one thousand names on our membership list, only about three hundred pay the \$5.00 dues and receive the Purdy Report. How many of those will agree to pay \$10.00 annually? Those of you who want to put off the dues increase, at least for a few years, can pay dues in advance for as many years as you want at the \$5.00 annual rate, since the new rate will not take over until 1-1-2010. If you want to do this, send a check (**made out to "Purdy Association"**), and note on the check how many years you are paying for. Send the check to Sec/Treas **James Meechan, 145 Laura Dr, Gahanna, OH 43230-2140.**

Karen and I hope all of you have a great summer, and are planning to attend the Savannah reunion.

Sincerely,
Larry DiPasquale

2009 REUNION ATTENDEES

Donal & Doris Anderson
Jonathon & Terry Arnold
William Arnold
Ray Baker
Donald & Kathlene Cleveland
Raymond & Ginette Condry
Maurice & Phyllis Constant
Charles & Roberta Danley
Joseph & Mary DePace
Larry & Karen DiPasquale
John Dougherty
William & Janet Dow
Hubert Doyle
Thomas & Carol Doyle
Charles & Eileen Gerardi
Arthur Harrington
Fred & Judy Harrington
Douglas Harvey
CDR Donald Hazen
George & Shirley Houk
Robert & Cheryl Johnson
Kenneth & Turidia Joyce
Chester & Sybil Kahapea
Richard & Nancy Kain
Richard & Pat Kummerl
Richard Kummerl II
Andrew & Marie Lamora
Harry & Alma Martz
James & Mary Meechan
Tony & Judi Meyer
John & Anna Mikulak
Robert & Nilda Morris
Russell & Barbara Mountjoy
John & Rita Mustakos
Harold & Jean Nunamacher
Gerald & Jeanie O'Neil
Philip Payer
John Coiro
Kenneth & Eileen Petit
John & Joy Powers
Carl Pumo & guest
Armando & Annette Rebeiro
Ernest & Janet Reed
John & Janet Sanders
Richard & Terry-Lee Sandstrom
Larry & Laurette Sharp
Wayne & Judy Stewart
Stephen & Trudy Stout
Barney & Lou Strutton
Steve & Betty Tuzikow
Vernon & Gerry Van Grevenhof
Dominic & June Vella
Robert & Javoen Wertz
Daniel & Jean Zavisza

Total Members: 53
Guests: 45
GRAND TOTAL: 98



WELCOME MAT

The USS PURDY family proudly welcomes the following recently located shipmates. We hope to see you at the next reunion. You are invited to become an active member of the association.

Milton Bayer (1970-73) ETR3
1901 S Knights Pl
Lincoln, NE 68506
402-486-1415
Mabayer48@hotmail.com

Lenny DeVirgino (1958-61) SN
6 Ambassador Ln
Newburg, NY 12550
845-564-3742

Gerald O'Neil (1959-60) SN
839 Esperance Rd
NY 12066
518-875-6442

NEWSLETTER FINANCIAL REPORT

This Purdy Report is being sent to 181 dues paying members only. Please send your annual \$5.00 contribution (checks made out to "Purdy Association") to:

Jim Meechan
145 Laura Dr
Gahanna, OH 43230

The following have contributed since the last newsletter:

Larry DiPasquale
Andy Lamora
John Mikulak
John Mustakos
Adolph Perrell
Charles Sterling
Arney Strutton
Dominic Vella
Robert Wertz

The cost of this issue is \$371.88



TAPS

We regret to announce the PURDY REPORT was notified of the following shipmates' deaths. The entire crew extends the hand of sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased.

David McCalla
(190-51) SO3 O Div
Died May 23, 2009

Leo Emrick
Date of death not reported

Frank Hendricks
(1964-65) RM2/E-5 CR Div
Died March 17, 2009

William Hensinger
(1964-65) Ensign 2nd Div
Died March 9, 2009

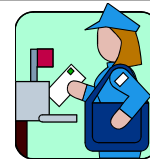
Anthony De Carlo
(1957-59) RM3 C Div
Died September 8, 2008

Darrell Stanton
Date of death not reported

Keith Westover
(1964-65) BT2
Died August 19, 2008

Carl Kole
Plankowner (1944-47) LTJg C Div
Died May 24, 2009

Anyone who knows of, or becomes aware of, the death of a shipmate, please notify the editor so that shipmate can be recognized in the newsletter and his name added to the Honor Roll.



MAIL CALL

Dear Larry,

Carl B. Kole, an original plank holder for the USS Purdy, passed away peacefully from old age on May 24, 2009 at 11:24 AM PST. The US Flag the USS Purdy was flying on VJ Day, that Carl brought to USS Purdy reunions, was cremated with Carl and will be buried with him at Willamette National Cemetery in Portland, Oregon at 11 AM on June 8, 2009.

I was Carl's friend for the last 36 years of his life, legal representative and now trustee for his estate. I always called Carl on April 12th because that was the anniversary of the 1945 attack on the USS Purdy during the battle of Okinawa and also FDR's death. I called Carl on April 12, 2002 and he had been crying because he had been thinking about his friends killed in action on April 12, 1945. I think Carl was suffering post traumatic stress syndrome 57 years after the events of April 12, 1945.

In the spring of 2002, the U.S. was again at war and the 60th anniversary of the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor had been in the news as a comparison to the 9/11 attacks on New York City and the Pentagon. All this brought forward memories that Carl had suppressed for 57 years.

I suggested, and Carl agreed, that we should travel to Pearl Harbor for the December 7, 2002 ceremonies and place a wreath from the USS Purdy Crew on the USS Arizona Memorial. When we visited the Memorial, everyone of his fellow visitors followed Carl off the boat and into the Memorial Shrine Room where Carl presented the USS Purdy Crew wreath and spoke briefly concerning the sacrifice of his shipmates and the unbroken line of Americans who have defended our country since our independence. Carl had a baritone voice that resonated off the marble walls of the shrine room, and I will never forget that moment and the deepest respect paid to Carl by his fellow visitors.

When the Purdy was attacked by Kamikaze on April 12, 1945, she lost fifteen men killed in action that day.

We'll miss Carl and he loved attend-

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PURDY MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE

JACKETS- - - \$55.00 SWEATSHIRTS- - \$22.00 POLO SHIRTS- - \$16.00
All prices include shipping.

To place an order or for questions, call Bill Dow at 860 426-1278, or e-mail at: janetbilldow@sbcglobal.net

Orders must be received before the end of June. Orders will be placed the first week of July. Mail checks to Bill Dow, 11 Riverside Dr., Southington, CT 06489. Those who ordered at the reunion, send checks in July.

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ing USS Purdy reunions.

Sincerely,
Hal Oien, DWD, MAGD
22750 SW 65th Ave
Tualatin, OR 97062
haloien@comcast.net

CHAPLAIN FRED'S REPORT

Ahoy Fellow Swab Jockies and Fellow Jockiettes,

Philly was the best Reunion yet, in my mind, what little mind I have left. I am writing slow because Bill Dow said some of the shipmates read slow. We had our first Philly Cheese Steak sandwich and it was great. At Independence Hall a Philly pigeon crapped on my forehead. Thank you Kathy Cleveland. She had a moist towel to wipe my face off with. She said when a bird craps on you, it is good luck. Good luck for whom, me or the bird? Valley Forge was great. USS New Jersey was awesome. Thank you, Pat Miller. Larry, she did a great job. Congrats to our Officers, Larry, Bill and Jim. Great to see the first timers. Jerry O'Neil, John Sanders and Chuck Danley. Thanks to Marie Lamora for putting Splenda in my Coke. I got to hug Jean Zavisza. I always wanted to hug an officer's wife. Tony, your head of hair scared Smiley O'Neil half to death. Dan Z., Andy L and I ran up the steps of the Philly Museum of Art. Just like Rocky. Bill Dow said if I ran up those steps he would wear a Yankee shirt. But, the way they are playing, neither one of us want to wear a Yankee shirt. Bobby Johnson, Ken Petit and I called Chuck Danley. He only lived half an hour away. Chuck and his wife Roberta came over on Saturday. Judy said Chuck looks too young to have served with us. Phyllis forgot the sweet bread, but Chet and Chubby sent me some from Hawaii. We will all wear our green shirts on Friday, so bring them to Savannah. God Bless the lady at Valley Forge who was hugging us all and for thanking us for the great job we had done. She lost her son in Viet Nam, so we are making a mark on our world. Dick Kain and Nancy, hope you made it home safely to Florida. I talked to Cletus and, yes, there is a Monkey's Eyebrow, Kentucky. We had a flasher, but I can't mention any names. We also had a pole dancer. I don't want to embarrass her, so

I won't tell you it was Bobby Johnson's wife. Hi, Sweetie and Uncle Art. On one of our bus tours we had some "Shady Ladies," Phyllis, Joy and Shirley. Enough said. Good to see Don Hazen, hope you got your picture of the green shirts. Bugs Mountjoy, thanks for putting a snake under my napkin. You probably think we are even. Ha! Ha! Uncle Art was on his way to California when he ran into Doug Harvey. They met in the airport and they went to Detroit together. Uncle Art had the misfortune to fly on the same flight with Doug. Hi, Mickey, we miss you. Joe DePace said if Doug and Art were together for 4 hours, Art talked for 2 minutes and Doug talked for 248 minutes. Lee Pumo, will send your hot relish when it is ready. I think Wayne Stewart and Ray Condry danced every dance, but not with each other. John and Sweetie, where is Bristol, Maine? Jean & Dan Zavisza are going to adopt me. Then I won't have to call him Mr. Zavisza. I can call him Dad. On Saturday when they were taking all our pictures

in groups of when we served, all those flashes from the cameras reminded me of my last DWI. Thanks Jean and Harry Nunamacher for the pictures. Joke time: There was a guy about 98 years old, about Mindo's age, April 28, 19??, who was home in bed and the Dr. said there was nothing he could do for him. The Priest gave him last rights and he lay there thinking about his past life and he smelled baking powder biscuits. He said his wife Annette was making baking powder biscuits, his favorite food. He struggled to the kitchen and reached for one of them. She hit him on the back of the hand with a wooden spoon and said, "Leave them alone. They are for your funeral." Thanks, Larry, Barney, Kenny and John for assisting me with the Memorial. We will close for now with this thought: the directions to heaven are turn right and go straight.

God Bless,
Chaplain Fred and Judy the Cutie

ATLANTIC FLEET EXERCISE ALPHA (LantFlex Alpha) & USS PURDY DD-734

By Robert E. Johnson SOG-3

I don't remember the exact time frame, but it was between late 1958 and 1960, and what really bugs me is that I have a copy of a couple messages that were sent to Purdy after the operation was over, and at the present time I cannot find them to send along with this little bit of Purdy history.

Atlantic Fleet Exercise Alpha contained over 156 ships which included 4 Aircraft Carriers, there had to be a couple of Aggressor ships, hence the USS Macon CG-132 and USS Purdy DD-734. Macon and Purdy were assigned to the Navy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and we were designated as Guided Missile Cruiser and Guided Missile Destroyer. Our assignment was to slip past the U.S. Navy's Pickett Ships, slip past the outer screen of Destroyers, get by all the Scout Aircraft looking for us, and penetrate the inner screen and launch our 30 missiles at the High Value Targets, ie: the Carriers. Not a bad assignment, 2 against 156, but we brave sailors of the Soviet ships Macon and Purdy could tear up the ships of the Capitalistic American Navy. So departure time came around and with it orders from the American Navy that we

had to stay inside the Containment Area. Macon and Purdy set out to make their battle plans and headed for their destiny. Macon and Purdy were assigned radio circuits for the Primary Tactical and Secondary Tactical Radio Frequencies for our operations against the U.S. Navy. The U.S. Navy was not allowed to monitor or use the frequencies, Rules of Engagement you know, but we had an independent referee out there who was not on either side—the Communications Cruiser USS Canberra CA-70 was neutral and did her job well, and would be beneficial to the Soviet Destroyer Purdy later. First order was given to us by Soviet Commander aboard Macon was, "We don't take orders from the "Capitalistic American Navy" and immediately headed for a point outside the "Containment Area," mainly just inside the Arctic Circle. We sat there for about 3 days and let the American Navy bust their buns looking for us. When the Commodore figured we had the American Navy frustrated looking for us, he sounded the Charge and off we went to the Containment Area. The Commodore felt that our chances of sinking a high

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value target was greater if he split his force, and sent Purdy on her way with a Good Hunting Signal. Two days later, Macon was sunk as she was a highly recognizable ship and a long way from any of the Cruisers in the screen which made her vulnerable. Purdy got devious, we moved to on the northern end of the Containment Area in calm waters and disguised our self. On the top of Mount 52 we changed our hull number from 734 to 777, the USS Zellars. On the port side we changed the hull number from 734 to 834, which was the Harry F. Bauer, and on the starboard side we changed the hull number from 734 to 738, which was the Turner. All three of those Destroyers were with the American Fleet we were about to attack. The reason was to throw off fast moving Scout Planes and Surface Ships into reporting a Destroyer that wasn't us. At night we rigged three fire hoses and tied them to the taff rail at a 45 degree angle, set the nozzles for a full stream of water. This was done to help the enemy paint a larger contact on their radar than a Destroyer. We also rigged white lights all along the main deck, bow to stern, and along the 0-1 Level to try to look like a Merchant Vessel at night. This ruse did not work. Purdy, at the time, had a group of Beach Jumpers on board. They were Radiomen who specialized in Radio Deception. They had all their radio and electronic equipment in a Conex Box aft of Number 2 Stack. Their job was to tape the enemy's radio messages, change them around and reissue the messages and send the enemy off on wild goose chases and generally mess up the Standing Orders issued to the U. S. Fleet. They also sent out false, made up messages to our enemy using their Admiral's Coded Signals. It had Defensive Screens in a turmoil quite a lot. Purdy had the fleet so confused that we got through the Pickett ships and were on the outer screen when we started our attack on the High Value Targets. We started our high speed run toward the Carriers as soon as we were able, and when we were finally discovered, the Engineers were pushing Purdy along at a steady 39 knots—we literally out ran most of the Destroyers chasing us. The Carriers launched their planes, A-4 Skyhawks and F-8 Crusaders. During this melee Purdy was credited with sinking 17 Destroyers and Cruisers with her missiles and a number of Aircraft, but Purdy was finally done in. Four Carriers launching their Aircraft literally filled the sky. Our Captain came on the 1MC and

warned everyone to stay inside the skin of the ship because supposedly the aircraft were armed with 1 lb bags of flour to mark real time hits on us. I never saw any flour bags come at us. We also did not get to launch any missiles on the High Value Targets, as we were sunk by the Aircraft. However, the highlight for me was when the USS Hymann DD-732 came up off our port stern and indicated 5" 38 hits and claimed a kill on us. Remember the Canberra CG-70? She came up on the radio and told Hymann that the Purdy had registered a missile kill and sank you a half hour ago. A cheer went up all over the ship. It meant more to us to have sunk the Hymann than the other 16 ships.

Now for this Operation and Action the USS Purdy DD-734 was awarded the following medal: (Of course they were Russian, but we were a Russian ship at the time.)

- Heroes of the Soviet Union
- The Order of Lenin
- Order of the Red Star
- Soviet Navy Bravery Medal

I hope this brings back a memory for the shipmates I served with, and I hope it brings a grin to the faces of the shipmates I did not serve with. This is a true story, and it was a fun operation for us.

Anchors Away Guys!
Bob Johnson

MY MOST INTERESTING ASSIGNMENT IN THE NAVY

Editor's Note: We asked in an e-mail request for everyone to write about the most interesting assignment they had in the Navy. Here are the responses:

John Sanders aka "J.C. Bulbs", SM3 1959-61:

From basic training at the Great Lakes Naval Recruit Training Depot, I was assigned in the spring of 1958 to the United States Naval Ceremonial Guard at the Navy Recruiting Station in the Anacostia section of Washington, D.C. The Guard, or Honor Guard as it was sometimes called, performed a variety of ceremonial functions, mainly funerals of Navy personnel at Arlington National Cemetery and arrivals of foreign heads of state at Washington airports.

I can't recall, but I believe the Guard consisted of about 80 of us. We lived in a barracks all to ourselves at the receiving station.

Each evening a schedule would be posted with the following day's assignments. We were divided into two groups depending on our height. The taller among us were assigned to firing squad or color guard duty, while our shorter brethren were body bearers or ushers. On a typical day we might have anywhere from one to six funeral ceremonies at Arlington and or an arrival at one of Washington's two major airports. Those of us assigned on a given day would board a grey Navy bus that would take us to Arlington to begin our day's work. Sometimes there would be a church service inside the chapel at Arlington cemetery. We would wait outside until the service was finished and then go to the grave site. The body bearers would remove the flag-covered casket from the hearse and carry it to the grave and set it down. A clergyman would say some prayers. The body bearers would then carefully fold the flag and the head body bearer would briskly approach the next-of-kin and hand the crisply and precisely folded flag with a smartly rendered hand salute. The six main firing squad, posted a discreet distance from the grave would then fire three rifle shots (using blank ammunition), after which a bugler posted nearby would blow taps. The entire detail would then march off and board the bus. We would then go immediately to our next assignment or just hang out in the bus until the next assignment. As indicated earlier, on a busy day we might handle six of these funeral ceremonies.

With arrivals of heads of state at airports we would be driven by bus to the airport and line up on the tarmac and be standing at attention when the plane carrying the dignitary taxied up. The head of state would review the troops walking by, accompanied either by the President of the USA, the Vice President, or someone like the Secretary of State. The dignitaries would then enter limousines and drive off. We would then either board our bus and go back to our barracks in Anacostia or to another funeral ceremony at Arlington.

When not actually on funeral or arrivals detail, we would spend our time sleeping, doing our laundry, polishing our brass, shining our shoes and standing watch.

Being six feet tall, I was a firing

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squad member. The sharpest among us were assigned to Color Guard duty. The sharpest of the sharp was the head color guardsman and it was he who carried the American Flag. During my time at the Guard, the head color guardsman was a tall slim fellow from Kansas. I wish I could remember his name, but I cannot. I do remember that he was one squared away dude! His last name may have been Perry. The Guard also participated in funerals at Arlington of high government officials. The last funeral detail I was on was for one of them, John Foster Dulles, once our Secretary of State.

Duty in the Ceremonial Guard was limited to one year. Following my year at the Guard, I received my orders to report to the USS Purdy DD-734, then in dry dock at the Boston Navy Yard in the Charlestown section of Boston. The day I reported aboard was a bleak and rainy day in April, 1959 and I found the ships to be a mess, with air hoses everywhere and sailors in the dungarees and blue chambray shirts, busy chipping paint and applying new grey paint on what would be my home for the next two years.

When I reported on board I was assigned as a deck ape and did my share of chipping, sanding, polishing and painting. That grew old fast, and I looked around and tried to figure out what job I could strike for that would be easier. I decided on the signal bridge and eventually was assigned as a signalman striker under the tutelage of Signalman First Class Billy Cowan of Texas. Soon I got to know and become friends with other Purdy crewmembers like Gerry "Smiley" O'Neill, Lenny DeVirgilio, Jim Peck, Dominick Vella, Fred "The Head" Harrington, Vito Sinpoli, Carl Sansone, Pat Fonzo. These men, and others, helped make my tour on the Purdy a memorable and enjoyable one that I will never forget.

P.S. Here's a link to a background article on the Navy's Ceremonial Guard. <http://usmilitary.about.com/od/navyassign/a/navyguard.htm>

Daniel Aguilar, OSC Ret USNR-R 1967-69:

Before reporting to the Purdy, I enlisted into the Regular Navy from the reserves. I requested RM A School and was sent to Bainbridge, MD for RM A School. While I was learning to become a Radioman, I just

didn't understand all the dits and dots, so I was dropped. While waiting to be processed out, I was assigned to cleanings detail in RM B School. On the chalkboard I saw funk out and go to NAM. So when I had to fill out my dream chit, I asked for NAM, after all, the Navy never gives you your first choice. After all I joined the Navy so I won't have to go to war, live in a tent, or fire a rifle, right!!! So when I got my orders to report to BoatRonOne in Naval Amph Base, Cal., so I went and there I found another 500 plus sailors all with the same orders. I soon found out I was heading to Nam. I had been assigned to a new unit called Swift Boats which was a small 50 foot 1 inch Man of War boat assigned to Operation Market Time to stop the bad guys from getting supplies to the other bad guys in Nam. So I reported in August and underwent a lot of hurry up and wait. I was assigned to the crew 21, and we trained as a team. We went to water survival, SERE, small arm, hand to hand combat, and boat training. Water survival during November outside, SERE training after several other groups had been in the area which left none to nothing of natural foliage to eat or small animals to catch. We spent a week out there and ending with a POW phase. In December the crew went to NAM via Subic Bay to outfit the 21 boat. We then took the 21 boat to Danang, Vietnam. So we were the 21 crew of this new unit to be trained and we put the 21st boat in the water and took it into a war zone. While we were there we boarded lots of native fishing craft, gave gun fire support, got wet, rode out heavy seas while the big boy went into the harbor, got shot at, took POWs and lots of riding around looking for Victor Charlie and sometimes finding him. So this was my first real exposure to the Navy and I enjoyed every minute of my time there. I still have contact with many of the sailors who followed me. Enclosed are some photos of my time there. (See page 8.)

SEE YOU IN SAVANNAH, GA IN 2010

Savannah, Georgia's first city, will charm you with its beautifully restored homes, its tree-filled squares and its historic past. Georgia was founded in 1733 by James Oglethorpe and was the thirteenth and final American colony. It was named after England's King George II and Savannah became its first city. Oglethorpe laid the city out in a series of grids that allowed for wide open streets intertwined with shady public squares and parks that served as town meeting places and centers of business. Savannah had 24 original squares with 21 still in existence. These squares make Savannah a beautiful city and add to its truly Southern charm. Tall live oaks dripping with Spanish moss, along with fountains and statuaries, fill the squares, making the city one of America's most popular vacation spots.

Below is a small sampling of things to do and see in Savannah. Read through them and then let us know your wishes for the reunion by filling out the survey at the end.

ATTRACTIONS

Savannah Riverboat Tour: Want to see a different view of Savannah? Take a cruise on the Savannah River Queen, a replica 19th century stern-wheel riverboat. Daily one-hour sightseeing cruises, as well as lunch and dinner cruises, are offered from River Street.

Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum: See artifact collections from the Mighty Eighth Air Force, whose headquarters were founded in Savannah in 1942. The Mighty Eighth's bombers and fighters operated during WWII and continue to be an important component of the US Air Force's Air Combat Command. The museum contains thou-

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

sands of historical objects, including three-dimensional items ranging from flight gear to materials crafted by veterans during their stay in POW camps.

Old Fort Jackson: Old Fort Jackson is the oldest standing fort in Georgia. Begun in 1808 and used in the War of 1812, it saw its greatest use as the headquarters for the Confederate river defenses during the Civil War. Visitors today can see military hardware including projectiles and cannons from the CSS Georgia, a Confederate ironclad that is sunk in the Savannah River. This is one of Savannah's most popular tourist attractions. A special program, including dinner at the fort, can be arranged for groups.

Ships of the Sea Museum: Ships of the Sea Maritime Museum exhibits ship models, paintings and maritime antiques, principally from the great era of Atlantic trade and travel between England and America during the 18th and 19th centuries. It is housed in the elegant home built for the president of Savannah Steamship Company, William Scarbrough. The site also boasts a delightful garden area.

Roundhouse Railroad Museum: Savannah's Central of Georgia Railway National Landmark District is the

oldest and most complete Antebellum railroad manufacturing and repair facility still in existence in the US. Thirteen of the original structures, built in 1845, are still standing. The Roundhouse Railroad Museum now has permanent exhibits in five of the structures. Included are steam engines, belt-driven machinery, locomotives and railroad rolling stock, and model railroad layouts.

Fort Pulaski: Fort Pulaski was taken by Union troops in April of 1862 when they directed the first rifled cannon fire at the fort, breaching the southeast angle. The accuracy and range of rifled cannon rendered brick fortifications obsolete. The fort was the first military assignment for the young Robert E. Lee. This remarkably intact example of 19th century military architecture, with its estimated 25 million brick and 7.5 foot thick walls, is preserved for future generations.

City Tour: There are several ways to tour the city of Savannah. One is on the horse-drawn carriage rides available in the city. Another is with various trolley tours that are offered, and still another is a walking guided tour. All tour the historic downtown squares and waterfront area, and some include admission to an historic home in the city. Savannah is a lovely town and you won't want to leave without seeing it up close.

USS PURDY 2010 SURVEY SAVANNAH, GA

In order to insure we provide the kind of reunion that you want, please take a few minutes to read over this survey, then complete and return to:

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

OR FAX: 828-256-6559
OR www.mlrsinc.com/purdy

REUNION ACTIVITIES

Please check any of the activities that you would like to see on the agenda.

Savannah Riverboat Tour _____

Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum _____

Old Fort Jackson _____

Ships of the Sea Museum _____

Roundhouse Railroad Museum _____

Fort Pulaski _____

ABOUT THE REUNION

Do you want entertainment after the Saturday night banquet?
 ___ Yes ___ No

Do you prefer breakfast together as a group every morning? _____
 Or only on a Sunday morning farewell breakfast? _____

Registration packets will be mailed out approximately 90 days prior to the reunion. Be sure to read the packets carefully.

Return surveys by July 31, 2009



Dinner for the crew



POW