

The FLAGSHIP

Volume 10 Issue 4

November 2002

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS ROWE & USS WATTS



Special Points of Interest

- *The reunion in Reno was great ! See what went on in our cover story.*
- *A list of reunion attendees appears on page two. See who was at Reno and join them next year in Charleston.*
- *Bob Wood has a rundown of the reunion on page two.*
- *WELCOME MAT on page three has six newly located shipmates. Hope one of them is a familiar name to you.*
- *High praises for the crew and the Rowe in a letter in MAIL CALL on page three.*
- *Part III of the Action Report for the USS Watts is on page four.*

GOOD TIME IN RENO AT 2002 REUNION

Reno, NV, was the site of the 2002 USS Rowe/ USS Watts reunion. The September 19-22 event was held at the Holiday Inn with thirty former shipmates and twenty-three guests in attendance. The welcome reception at 5:00 pm on Thursday got things off and going. The attendees were welcomed and introductions were made. No function was scheduled for the evening so everyone could have dinner with old friends and renew acquaintances, as well as have a chance to get to know the new attendees. The hospitality room became a popular spot for sharing lives since the Navy and for story swapping.

Friday morning the Dis-

cover Reno tour departed. It included the Nevada History Museum; the impressive mansions built by great railroad, casino and mining barons; "Divorce Bridge" where thousands of newly divorced persons toss their wedding rings; the National Automobile Museum and, of course, a narrated tour during the drive.

The Lake Tahoe Dinner Cruise on Friday night was definitely one of the most popular events of the reunion. The views were spectacular, the food was great and the people weren't too bad either! What more could you want!

The western part of the reunion was a trip to Virginia City. Here one could relive the past and see

what life was like in the 1850s. The group had free time to visit the shops, restaurants and other sites along main street.

Upon returning to the hotel from Virginia City, the business meeting was held to decide on the site for 2004. (Charleston had already been picked for 2003.) Colorado Springs was the choice for 2004 and Bob Wood and Jim Hanks will remain as coordinators.

Following cocktails and the photo session for the Sentimental Journal, the banquet for the USS Rowe and the USS Watts was held. After enjoying the delicious meal, a memorial service was held in remembrance of all former ship-

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mates known to have passed away since the last reunion. The night ended after some lively conversations and old Navy tales told at the dinner tables.

The reunion concluded after breakfast Sunday morning with hugs and handshakes abounding. Everyone was already looking forward to next year in Charleston and sharing more experiences with the friends they had made. Charleston is always a delightful city and hopefully it will be filled with "old" sailors from the USS Rowe and USS Watts next fall.

2002 REUNION ATTENDEES

- Derald & Marjorie Beer
- Paul & Margaret Bisson
- Donald Blanchard
- Robert & Betty Brandt
- Tommy & Sandi Brown
- Donald & Dee Ann Canby
- Carl & Glenda Cramer
- Robert & Kathleen Duggan
- Dave & Mimi Erb
- Bob & Barbara Lechtreck
- James & Rita Lindler
- Robert & Anita Lowe
- Donald & Helen Morrell
- Otto Piskac, Jr.
- George & Wilhelmina Reynolds
- Clarence & Margie Stegeman
- Edward & Frances Wojnar
- Robert & Ruth Wood
- Geroge & Yvette Woods
- Dale Bethke
- John & Gerda Burk
- Lewellyn & Shirley Chartier
- Hubert & Alaina Chinn
- Richard Cyr
- Ray Damskey
- Ronald & Mary Lou Dixon
- Charles Garner & Eunice Wahl
- James Hanks & Karen Gillett
- Jim Moore
- James Nelson

Total Members: 30
Guests: 23
GRAND TOTAL: 53

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The Flagship is the official publication of the USS ROWE and USS WATTS Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in February, May, August and November, *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 ROWE/WATTS. 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.

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.

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

On behalf of Jim Hanks and myself I want to thank each and every crewman who came to Reno for reunion number eleven. Also, thank you to all the guests, for a total of 54 in attendance.

We all seemed to have a good time. The hotel was adequate, the shuttle drivers were very helpful with extra requests and not much in the line of complaints.

The trip to Lake Tahoe and dinner cruise was excellent on Friday evening. The Saturday trip to Virginia City was also enjoyable.

We had our business meeting Saturday, followed by the banquet, memorial service and picture taking. After the breakfast buffet Sunday it was time to say our good-byes.

We had a number of crewmen there for the first time, and I feel that we will have a larger turnout at Charleston in 2003.

Bob Wood
 Coordinator, USS Rowe

P.S. Judy did an excellent job of hosting our reunion.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 08/02 **\$237.00**

Funds received since 08/02 issue **\$196.00**

Funds available for 11/02 issue **\$433.00**

Funds Expended for 11/02 issue **\$323.10**

Ending Balance \$109.90

Funds will be needed for the Feb. issue. Please mail contributions to ML&RS, Inc. at our address at the right and state that it is for the Rowe/Watts newsletter.



WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates have been located since the last issue of the newsletter. Welcome aboard. If we missed anyone, please accept our apology. Let us know and you'll be in listed in the next issue.

USS ROWE

Bobby Crump (1959) BT
19201 N Beneditt
Woodbridge, CA 95258
209-368-0334

Donald Morrell
(1951-53) SN1 2nd Div
6100 E Cholla St
Apache Junction, AZ 85219
480-982-0371

George Haller SN1
6213 S Foxhunt Dr
Tucson, AZ 85746
520-883-7153
g.j.haller@worldnet.att.net

Richard Carter (1955-58) SO2/c
863 Fairview Rd
Titusville, PA 16354
814-827-1127

USS WATTS

Tony Napoli
4400 Whitmere Ct
St. Louis, MO 63129-6310
314-416-8286

Lawrence Kessler (1955-56)
9779 La Arena Cir
Fountain Valley, CA 92708
714-968-6726
larry-kessler@att.net

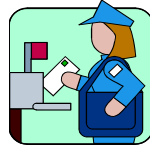


TAPS

The Flagship has learned of the following deaths since the last publication. Every member of the Association sends his heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of the deceased. If we missed anyone, please let us know and we will publish it in the next issue.

Sid Malone (USS Watts)
Died November 30, 2001

Virgil "Chick" Poss (USS Watts)
Died December 22, 1999



MAIL CALL

USS Rowe Shipmates,

I reported aboard the Rowe in Norfolk, VA in early 1958. I had just gotten out of the "Cross Bar Hotel" in Charleston, SC. I had been there because I had been a bad boy by going awol from the USS RF Keller DE419, a reserve trainer homeported at the naval gun factory in Washington, DC. When I went aboard I was a MMFA. I was aboard the Rowe until 1959 at which time it steamed to Orange, Texas to be decommissioned. The Rowe was a wonderful ship with a great crew. Everyone treated me with respect and friendliness. I made FN, then three months later I took the test for MM3 and passed. Six months later I went up for MM2 and passed. By then I was ready to be transferred to the USS Vogelgesang DD 862 in Charleston, SC via a swap with a young snipe named James Colina. I had been recommended for MM1, so after I had the required time in, I went up for MM1 and passed

that test and in due time I got my first class crow.

I don't want to be overly windy here, I just wanted to stress how great the Rowe had been. We had a wonderful chief in charge named "Chico" Pearson, an MM1 named Bob Mesfy and about the best MM2 in the Navy, in most of our opinions. His name was Lee Allen Charles King. He was from Emmaus, PA. We had a big old cuddly bear named Dale Robert Eisenhard, also from Emmaus.

To make a long story shorter, this was probably the best ship and crew I have had the honor and good fortune to serve with and on.

I would really love to meet some of the old crew of that era, but alas, time moves on and our numbers get smaller as each year passes.

If anyone remembers me, or knows of any crewmembers that were around during that time, please write me at ojisanjohn@webtv.net. or at:

John Williams
942 Blackwood Road
Chula Vista, CA 91910
619-421-0538

Dina,

My name is Rob Rielly and I am a historian currently working on a new book about the radar picket ships and the combat air patrol during the battle for Okinawa (April—June 1945). VC 96 was involved in flying CAP over the picket ships on a number of occasions, and I would like to cover some of their exploits in my book. Unfortunately, the National Archives has little information on the squadron and there are no aircraft action reports from that period in their collection. If you could put me in touch with any of the pilots, or the squadron historian, that would be a big help. I may be reached at 732-244-1950 or by e-mail RobRielly@aol.com. My mailing address is 520 Woodview Rd, Toms River, NJ 08755. Thank you for your attention.

Rob Rielly

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Dear Bob,

I just noticed that the e-mai for Rowe and Rudyerd Bay are the same. Rowe was one of the ships that served on radar picket duty at Okinawa and is included in my book. I am seeking contact with any veterans of the Okinawa campaign who may wish to share their recollections about radar picket duty. Again, I may be reached at 732-244-1950 or by e-mail RobReilly@aol.com. My mailing address is

520 Woodview Rd
Toms River, NJ 08755

Thank you for your attention.

Rob Rielly

Greetings,

Photos taken during the operations involving the Gray Ghosts would be interesting.

Ev Britz

OVERHEARD AT THE REUNION

By Judy Eury, ML&RS hostess

Don Morrell told this story:

I thought I would die if these guys didn't stop playing their "hillbilly" music. They had it on day and night. One day I decided to buy a ukulele to occupy my time and get away from that music. I practiced my ukulele every day, until the guys began to tell me to please stop with that twanging ukulele. Then one day I went to find my ukulele, and somebody had thrown it overboard!

Some Sailor Terms I Picked Up:

Throwing the monkey fist: this means to toss the line to shore. To weight the line, the rope is woven into a ball with a lead weight inside. It resembles a monkey fist.

Scuttlebutt: The water fountain or water cast or ship gossip.

FUSDAP: This was written in between the rungs of the ladders and meant, Forward Up Starboard Down Aft Port.

Farmers, Get off the Fence!: This was a command for sailors to get off the ship railing.

Gedunk: Ice cream as in "Here comes the Gedunk Truck."

Snafu: Situation normal, all fouled up.

Red Right Returning: This term was used to remember that the red buoys were to be on the right side at night when returning to sea.

Pin-ups: Pretty Girl

Looker: Pretty Girl

Snipe: A sailor who worked below the deck

Deck Ape: A sailor who worked on the deck

Feather Merchant: Yeoman (because of his feather insignia)

Skivvie Waver: Flagman

Ping Jockey: Sonar man

O.D.: Officer on Deck

Head: Bathroom

Bulb Snatcher: Electrician (my personal favorite)

Airdale: Navy Airman

Belly Robber: Supply Officer

Sparks: Radio man

Ladders: Stairs

Swabbie: A Sailor

too dry a condition and, subsequently, necessity for adequate lubrication was emphasized. At 1900 all hoists were cycled ten times and operated properly. While the hoist was inoperative, the crew succeeded in firing every other salvo by passing projectiles through the powder scuttle and the hatch between the gun and upper handling room. After excess grease was removed, the inter lock cam and the hoist operated satisfactorily during the remainder of the bombardment.

2. Gun one missed five salvos. Gun four missed two salvos and gun five missed one salvo. This was the first time that handling room crews had participated in the firing of more than twenty consecutive salvos.

3. Fire discipline was good.

4. Gunnery communications satisfactory.

5. (a) An eleven second salvo interval was used with firing being done from the stable element. CIC furnished the range and bearing of the target. The elevation of assigned target area was 50-100 feet. It was not necessary to apply an elevation correction. Indirect fire with the computer in local was used.

(b) Ninety-four salvos were fired in seventeen minutes, fourteen seconds. Salvo interval was eleven seconds. A total of four hundred forty-seven rounds of A.A. Common projectiles, all tracers plugged, were expended. Flashless powder was used.

(c) A number of fires were observed in the target areas. It is believed that ship's firing was effective.

2. No enemy opposition was noted by the Commanding Officer. Some observers stated that there was counter battery fire, but the Commanding Officer believes that explosion of our own force's salvos on shore was mistaken for shore battery fire.

Part IV will appear in the February issue.

PART II OF ACTION REPORT, USS WATTS (DD-567)

(Continued from Aug issue)

1. Performance of our ordnance material and equipment.

(a), (1) Gun number two missed fifteen salvos due to projectile hoist failure, caused by improper upkeep. On the third salvo fired the inboard lower projectile interlock cam jammed because of an excessive amount of grease behind the cam impeding free movement. On several occasions during practice firing these cams had been operated in

CHARLESTON IN 2003— A GREAT CHOICE

The 2003 Reunion of the USS Rowe and the USS Watts will be in the beautiful city of **Charleston, SC** on **September 18-21** at the **Radisson North Hotel**. If you have never been to Charleston, you are in for a real treat. Charleston has everything you could possibly want for a reunion site—beautiful natural and architectural scenery, great naval displays at Patriot's Point, rich history, fabulous shopping and great Low country food. Add to this the friendliness of the people and you will see why Charleston is one of the most popular cities for military reunions in the country. This is one reunion you can't miss!

ABOUT HISTORIC CHARLESTON

Charleston is the second largest city in South Carolina (Columbia, the capital, takes first place). The city's estimated 1998 population was 100,122. Charleston has a warm climate. In January, the average temperature is 55 degrees; in July, it's 82. But it's prudent to note that summertime temperatures can peak above the 100-degree mark. And the humidity, which is considerable in the Low Country during any season, makes the hot seem hotter and the cold seem colder. Autumn in Charleston, however, more than compensates for any discomfort during the other seasons. Many consider it the best time of year in the area; days are warm, nights barely chilled.

Charleston has a long and colorful history dating back to 1521 when the Spanish established a settlement at San Miguel de Gualdape, believed to have been near Winyah Bay. The settlement failed in less than a year and was abandoned.

Charles Town (as it was called then) was founded as the capital of Carolina in 1670. The founding fathers reported the population of Charles Town in 1672 as 263 "able

bodied men," 69 women, and 59 children under 16. In 1690 Charles Town was the fifth largest city in North America with a population of 1,200. By 1775 the number had grown ten-fold, to 12,000. In 1776 the first British soldiers arrived to occupy the city.

In early 1860 this great Colonial city was the cradle of succession and in that same year "*The Ordinance of Succession*" was signed here. On April 12, 1861, the first shots of the Civil War were fired. In February 1865, Sherman reached Middleton Plantation and destroyed it, moving on to Columbia without coming to Charleston.

Since the earliest days of occupation, the area has been plagued with major earthquakes and devastating hurricanes. As recent as 1989 Hurricane Hugo did major damage to the area.

Charleston has played a prominent role in the US Navy until the mid 90s when the Charleston Navy Base was closed.

Remnants of glory from the antebellum cultures still shine, even though Charleston is no longer the sleepy little southern town it was once thought to be. It is now a mix of the historic and the modern. A waterfront park now graces the area along the Cooper River where the slave trade flourished. From the famous mansions along the South Battery to the moss-laden Battery Park, to the Rainbow Row of brightly painted home that line the street, we are reminded of the historical past. The mansion of Colonel William Washington (cousin of President George) graces the west side of Church Street. Countless other relics and treasures of the past are found in this amazing city.

Modern Charleston now boasts of a booming economy, a modern medical school, colleges, the performing arts, a professional baseball team, and all of the amenities identifying Charleston as one of the South's finest cities. You can find

quality golf courses, first class restaurants, and night-life.

Charleston also abounds in supernatural activities. Perhaps the reason is simple inevitability; its stubborn citizens have lived on this once swampy peninsula for nearly 330 years. Or maybe it can be attributed to the numerous catastrophic blows rained upon the city; pirates, war, fire, plague, hurricane, and earthquake. And, of course, there are ghosts. Not everyone is capable of, or allowed to see them, but it seems that a chance encounter with one of the supernatural creatures decreases your wish to see another. It is reported that a floating headless torso exists in "Room 8" at the house located at 20 South Battery. We do not profess to know the timing of the ghost, but we can say it returns over and over again. What makes Charleston so supernaturally fascinating are the sheer abundance of ghostly characters here and the frequency of their chilling returns. A walking ghost tour is available, for the strong of leg and heart.

SNEAK PREVIEW OF ATTRACTIONS

Boone Hall Plantation:

Historic Boone Hall Plantation was used in the filming of the television mini-series "North and South." It was the background setting for parts of "Gone With the Wind." You can watch the ladies make their sweetgrass baskets, in addition to touring the lovely Georgian-style plantation.

Charles Museum:

Founded in 1773, it is the oldest museum in America and contains natural science, cultural history, ornithology, and ethnology departments, the Charleston Silver Exhibit, which is internationally recognized work by local silversmiths, dating from Colonial times to the 19th Century.

City Hall Council Chambers:

The City Hall Gallery is located in the Council Chamber at City Hall and

was built in 1801. It includes portraits of many important leaders, including one by George Trumball of George Washington.

Drayton Hall:

Built circa 1738, the Hall survived the Civil War intact and preserved almost in its original condition after more than 250 years. It is considered one of the oldest and finest examples of Georgian Palladian architecture in the nation.

Fort Sumter:

A boat will take you from Patriot's Point to Ft Sumter. Some of you may recall this is the fort that the Yankees secretly, and by night, reinforced (no doubt to launch a sneak attack on Charleston). This overt action forced the Confederates to make a pre-emptive strike which marked the beginning of what some historians have called the "Civil War." In Charleston it is known as the "War of Northern Aggression." Once at the Fort, a ranger from the National Park Service will give you an informative introduction before you tour this famous bastion and its marvelous museum.

Charleston Carriage Tour:

Leisurely ride through narrow streets and alleyways past carefully restored 18th and 19th century homes and buildings. Your guide will relate three hundred years of history to the accompaniment of horse's hooves clapping along the pavement.

Magnolia Gardens:

Designed circa 1680, this contains America's oldest garden and boasts one of the largest collections of azaleas and camellias. The inside of the country house holds as much history as the gardens, being the pre-revolutionary war summer home of the Draytons. It has something for everyone-nature train tour, petting zoo, wildlife observation tower, orientation theater, gift shop, art gallery, horticultural maze, Biblical Garden, herb garden, and more.

Old Exchange and Provost Dungeon:

No other Charleston attraction presents so much of our American heritage as does the Old Exchange. Early settlers built a Court of Guard here in which imprisoned pirates and Indians were kept in the lower level, while town meetings were held in the hall. The Old Exchange was completed in 1771 by the British. With its striking Palladian architecture, the Exchange dominated the harbor. It became the social, political, and economic hub of the bustling 18th century port. In 1965 part of the original seawall of Charles Towne was discovered during the excavation of the dungeon.

St. Michael's Episcopal Church:

Located on Meeting at Broad Street and completed in 1761, it is the oldest church edifice in the city and one of the few city churches in America to retain its original design. It was here that George Washington worshipped during his tour of the South in 1791. Its clock and ring of eight bells, except for short absences, have shared the lives of Charlestonians for over 200 years.

Patriot's Point:

This is the world's largest Naval Maritime Museum. Tour the famous WW II aircraft carrier USS YORK-TOWN, visit Medal of Honor Museum on board. Also tour the destroyer USS LAFFEY, a participant in the Normandy landings, the submarine USS CLAMAGORE, and the Coast Guard Cutter Ingham. There is also a model of a Navy Base like those used by Naval personnel in Vietnam.

Now that you have read about all the things that Charleston has to offer, please take a few moments to let us know which of these attractions you would most like to see and do while in Charleston at the reunion. Please fill out the survey at the right and return it to us so we can custom design your activities to your wishes. We will use your responses and the input from your coordinators to plan your agenda.

2003 ROWE/WATTS SURVEY

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

Please check the attractions you would like to visit during the reunion.

Boone Hall Plantation _____

Charles Museum _____

City Hall Council Chambers _____

Drayton Hall _____

Charleston Carriage Tour _____

Fort Sumter _____

Magnolia Gardens _____

Old Exchange & Provost Dungeon _____

St. Michael's Episcopal Church _____

Patriot's Point _____

Would you like a Welcome Reception the first evening of the reunion?
Yes _____ No _____

Do you prefer breakfast all three mornings _____ or only on Sunday?

Do you want entertainment after the banquet? Yes _____ No _____

Return survey to:

Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc.
P O Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603
or Fax:
828-256-6559