

# The FLAGSHIP

Volume 11 Issue 4

November 2003

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS ROWE & USS WATTS



### Special Points of Interest

- *Some say it was the best reunion ever. See why in the cover story featuring a recap of the reunion.*
- *Reunion attendees are listed on page two. Come next year and be included.*
- *Your coordinators have their message on page two.*
- *WELCOME MAT has three new members. Drop them a line welcoming them to the group.*
- *Read about the "bagel incident" in MAIL CALL on pages three and four.*
- *Carl Cramer sent in a program from the recommissioning of the USS Rowe in 1954. See it on pages four and five.*
- *Don't forget the survey on page six.*

## RECAP OF 2003 REUNION IN CHARLESTON

With Hurricane Isabel raging to the north, the USS Rowe and USS Watts reunion enjoyed beautiful weather in sunny Charleston, SC for their 2003 reunion on September 18-21. The Radisson Hotel Charleston Airport welcomed thirty-eight former shipmates and thirty-two of their guests for their eleventh annual reunion. In attendance were five officers from the Rowe and eight first time attendees.

Guests began arriving on Thursday with registration beginning at 12:00 noon and continuing throughout the afternoon. At 5:00 pm the official start of the reunion, the welcome reception, was held, featuring light hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Wel-

coming remarks were made, and first-time attendees had the opportunity to introduce themselves so everyone could become acquainted. The remainder of the evening was free to begin the reminiscing and story-telling in the hospitality room or over dinner.

The Discover Charleston Day was on the agenda for Friday morning after breakfast. A fully narrated riding tour of the city featured views of the beautiful homes along the Battery, Rainbow Row and all the other lovely buildings in Charleston. A stop was made at the City Council Chambers where a guide gave a short history of Charleston. There was also time for shopping and lunch at the Old City

Market, one of Charleston's most popular areas. Then it was on to Boone Hall Plantation to see what plantation life was like in the Old South. Back at the hotel, refreshments were awaiting in the hospitality room for the tired, but happy group. There was time for relaxing a bit before the 6:00 pm social hour and the 7:00 pm Charleston "Plantation-style" buffet dinner. The evening was topped off with lively chatter at the dinner tables and later, in the hospitality room.

The sun rose on a beautiful Saturday morning for the tour of Patriot's Point in the Charleston Harbor. Here is the world's largest naval and maritime

*(Continued on page 2)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

museum where the aircraft carrier YORKTOWN, the destroyer LAFFEY, the submarine CLAMAGORE, and the Coast Guard cutter INGHAM are on display. Lunch was served to the group aboard the YORKTOWN in the CPO Mess. After lunch the group was taken by a Spirit of Charleston ship to Fort Sumter, located off the coast of Charleston. During the boat trip, a fantastic view of the Charleston harbor and the beautiful homes along the battery were visible. At the fort, Rangers from the Park Service gave an introduction before the tour of the famous bastion and its museum. The tour returned to the hotel in mid-afternoon, in time for a short rest before the business meeting at 5:00 pm. During the business meeting, Robert Wood from the Rowe and James Hanks from the Watts were chosen to be the coordinators for the coming year. Colorado Springs, CO was chosen as the reunion site for 2004. The most anticipated event of the reunion, the USS Rowe and USS Watts banquet was next on the agenda. It began with the 7:00 pm social hour and photo session, then the banquet beginning at 8:00 pm. Following a delicious meal, a short memorial service was held. This service was in memory of all the former shipmates who have passed away or whose deaths have been learned of since the last reunion. Everyone then enjoyed the company of their tablemates and the retelling of stories from their days on the Rowe or Watts.

Those who could stay for the Sunday breakfast buffet enjoyed one last chance to be together before returning home. Good-byes were said, and plans were made to meet again next year in Colorado Springs, CO. Here's hoping those plans will include you!

**Correction:**

*On the front page of the last issue the USS FECHTELER (DDR-870) (not Flechteller) was spelled incorrectly. We apologize for the error.*

## 2003 REUNION ATTENDEES

### USS ROWE (DD-564)

- Derald & Marjorie Beer
- Paul & Margaret Bisson
- John & Edna Bower
- Norman & Mary Ann Britt
- Donald & Dee Ann Canby
- Van & Jamalyn Cannon
- Richard & Judy Carter
- Carl & Glenda Cramer
- Ronald & Marion Cundiff
- Chester Davis
- Robert & Kit Dean
- Joseph & Roberta DeBono
- Robert & Kathleen Duggan
- Kenneth Grannis
- Richard & Patti Hale
- George & Doris Haller
- Paul & Mary Kennedy
- Bob Lehtreck
- James & Rita Lindler
- Thomas & Roberta Mills
- Ted & Carol Mullet
- John O'Meally
- Arthur O'Meally, Jr.
- Kenneth & Mary Quandt
- George & Wilhelmina Reynolds
- Edmond & Ann St. Laurent
- Clarence & Margie Stegeman & Ron & Margaret Campbell
- Robert & Ruth Wood
- George & Yvette Woods

### USS WATTS (DD-567)

- Charles Garner & Eunice Wahl
- James Hanks & Karen Gillett
- Eugene & Elaine Kastein
- William & Dolores Mauger
- Bernard & Katie Rogenski
- Herbert & Eva Spalla
- Roger & Johnnie Ruth Stults
- Walter Werner

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Total Members:</b> | <b>38</b> |
| <b>Guests:</b>        | <b>32</b> |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>   | <b>70</b> |

## MESSAGE FROM COORDINATORS

Our 2003 reunion for the USS Rowe and USS Watts at Charleston, SC is now history, but I am sure that all of us will remember this particular one for some time to come. We had five that canceled or a total of nine, leaving us with a total of 38 shipmates and 70 for total number. Some cancellations may have been out of concern for the weather. As it turned out, we actually had ideal weather. I believe that it was Mr. Kohen White that stopped long enough to cancel and it sounded like his wife was ill and they had to get going. He only talked to Ralph, who was doing the registering, and we would like to hear from them to find out if she is all right. *(See letter in Mail Call, page four.)*

It is probably the best reunion we have had in the twelve years since we started out at Omaha. However, cannot say that everything went off without a hitch. On Saturday, some things were left on the bus and when we came back from Ft. Sumter, one of the buses had been replaced, and let's hope that the Kennedy's get their missing articles back. Do not know if anyone else lost anything.

Anyhow, we again want to thank each and every person that attended, and it was great to see such a large number of new shipmates with us. The Watts number was unusually low and will have to try some more recruiting.

Let's hope that the majority of us will be able, ready and willing to be at Colorado Springs in 2004.

Bob Wood, USS Rowe  
Jim Hanks, USS Watts

P.S. Talked to a gentleman from the USS Floyd Parks DD-884. They were getting on the same plane with us at Charleston. They had 110 shipmates or a total of 200.



## WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates have been located since the last issue of the newsletter. Welcome aboard. We hope to see you at the next reunion.

*Henry Johnson (USS Rowe)*  
2142 Fairweather St  
Henderson, NV 89052  
hjohn645@msn.com

*Raymond Gravley (USS Watts)*  
198 W Cleve St  
Mt. Airy, NC 27030  
336-719-6803

*Richard Ridenhour*  
(USS Watts) 1952-56  
9120 Shawn Ave  
Port Richey, FL 34668  
727-848-2551

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance after 08/03 **\$99.56**

Funds received since 08/03 issue  
**\$370.00**

Funds available for 11/03 issue  
**\$469.56**

Funds Expended for 11/03 issue  
**\$338.17**

**Ending Balance \$131.39**

**Funds will be needed for 02/04.**

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Our reunions work so you don't have to.



## TAPS

*The Flagship* has learned of the following deaths since the last publication. Not all deaths were recent, but were just learned of. Every member of the Association sends his heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of the deceased. If you learn of the death of a former shipmate, please let us know so his name can be included in TAPS and also added to the Honor Roll for the next reunion.

**USS ROWE**  
*Ray Dishner*  
Date of death not known

*W. J. Brown (Ltjg)*  
Died 1997

*James Trainham (BM)*  
Died 1999

*Donald Blanchard*  
(1943-45) EM3/c E Div  
Died September 16, 2003

*Clifton Smedstad (MM1)*  
Died February 26, 2003

*Joe Merkel*  
Died July 17, 2003

*Certice Corley*  
Died February 7, 2003

**USS WATTS**  
*Robert Gant*  
Died September 15, 2002



## MAIL CALL

ML&RS,

It was with sadness that we learned of the death of Donald Blanchard, who was always in atten-

dance at our reunions. I understand that he had a massive heart attack while driving his car. Our best to his wife, Dorothy, and her family.

I had a call from Ray Smith who was coming from Washington State. Ray, along with his son, were headed for the reunion by train. They got to New York and the trains were cancelled. He called Charleston to cancel and they caught a plane to Chicago to return home. Sorry, Smitty, but hope to see you at Colorado Springs.

Bob Wood  
USS Rowe

Flagship,

I was with the USS Rowe 1951-1955 and I like to hear the many articles about the ship and all the fellow sailors that served aboard it before and after my time in the Navy.

My wife Mary Lou and I have enjoyed a number of ship reunions but find that this year we will not make it down to Charleston. Again thank you for the Flagship news.

Russell Hazell  
2133 Westview Dr  
Des Plaines, IL 60018

Flagship,

Whenever I receive a Flagship Newsletter I can't wait to see what I'll find...the name of a shipmate on the USS Rowe well remembered, or a not to be forgotten "incident?" A letter in the Flagship issue, Aug. 2003 helped me to relive a "funny" story that I have told many times.

On November 18, 1945, the Rowe, along with other destroyers in division 113, left Tokyo Bay for Midway Island with destinations of Pearl Harbor and San Diego. One day while on signal watch, a light came blinking from the USS Watts DD-567. I returned the "Call" with a go ahead to send their message.

The "light" from the Watts said, "Is Wunderman there?"

I replied, "This is Wunderman."

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The sender on the Watts replied, "This is Shapiro. I have a dozen bagels. Do you have any lox (smokey salmon) and cream cheese?"

I replied, "Knock it off. Don't get in trouble."

Fortunately, the Commodore of the destroyer squadron and the skipper of the Rowe, Commodore Young, were not on the bridge.

The letter to the Flagship that prompted me to repeat this story was sent in by Anita Shapiro informing the Flagship that her husband, Irving Shapiro (SM3/c) passed away on April 2, 2002. It was Irving who sent the "message" from the Watts. What a sense of humor to pull a "shtick" like that!

I want to thank the Flagship staff for helping me locate Anita Shapiro and her son Seth, whom I've contacted and told this "story." One of the "fun moments" and not to be forgotten.

Marty Wunderman  
4960 E Sabal Palm Blvd Apt 411  
Tamarac, FL 33319

Open letter to Rowe/Watts Reunion Attendees,

My wife Sharlie and I would like you to know how much we appreciate the card sent and signed by those attending the Rowe/Watts reunion. It was a ray of sunshine on an otherwise gloomy, gray day. And a special thanks to Bob Wood, Chairman, for the personal note attached.

By way of explanation, after driving to Charleston from Atlanta, we received an emergency phone call from Sharlie's internists that we should return to Atlanta immediately or check Sharlie into a hospital in Charleston. We returned to Atlanta. This suggestion was the result of blood work up we had done before leaving because Sharlie was running a fever that she couldn't shake. The final results were that Sharlie had pneumonia and subsequent test also revealed that she had AML, acute myelogenous leukemia. The reason for the gloomy, gray day. At our age, there really isn't a cure for AML.

Since then, the pneumonia has been cured. Sharlie's blood counts have stabilized and she goes into the leukemia clinic on an as need basis for blood work and antibiotics. We are trying to lead as normal a life as can be, avoiding crowds and places where infections may occur. Sharlie's condition and attitude is outstanding. I tell her if she was a male, she would have made a great Navy Seal, she is tough.

We thank you again for your concern and express our appreciation for your thoughtfulness. A special thanks to Ralph for taking care of the paperwork re our cancellation. That day was a little hectic. We were really looking forward to the Reunion. According to Bob, it was one of the better and larger reunions.

Kohen White  
Ltjg. USS Rowe  
1954-1958

## THE RECOMMISSIONING OF THE USS ROWE DD-564 AT CHARLESTON NAVAL SHIPYARD October 5, 1954

*Taken from the actual Recommissioning program. Submitted by Carl Cramer.*

### U.S.S. ROWE (DD-564)

The U.S.S. ROWE (DD-564) was built by the Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation of Seattle, Washington. Placed in commission on March 13, 1944, the ROWE conducted shakedown training at San Diego, California, and left the continental United States on 24 May of that year, underway for Pearl Harbor. After some time spent in escort duty back and forth between Pearl Harbor and the States, she was assigned to Commander North Pacific Forces for duty, and steamed in Kulak Bay, Adak, Alaska, on 9 August 1944, in company with other vessels of Destroyer Squadron 57. Unfavorable weather conditions during the winter of that year caused cancellation of

many missions for the squadron, but the ROWE participated in the initial bombardment of Matsuwa in the Kuriles on the night of 21 November. Throughout the spring of 1944, she took part in strikes against the Kuriles and training exercises around her port in Alaska, and, in May, was in the Task Force whose objective was the Marshall Islands. June found the ship on radar picket duty at Okinawa, and later, steaming to the Philippines and Leyte Gulf. In July of 1944, she left that area to take her place in a prolonged attack against the Japanese home islands. All through that month she remained with the Task Group, except for a short time when she was temporarily detached to conduct a bombardment on Chichi Jima, in the Bonin Islands. At the close of the war, the ROWE was still steaming with an Air Task Group, which was performing patrol missions over the home islands of Japan. This vessel was placed out of commission in reserve on 31 January 1947, and assigned to the Charleston Group, Atlantic Reserve Fleet.

### Program for Recommissioning of the USS ROWE (DD-564)

Officers and crew of the U.S.S. ROWE assemble aft.

Captain B.S. Anderson, U.S. Navy, Commander Charleston Group, Atlantic Reserve Fleet, and Captain Ralph Mills, U.S. Navy, Commander Sub Group ONE arrive on board and proceed aft for the ceremony.

The Prospective Commanding Officer introduces the guest.

Commander Charleston Group, Atlantic Reserve Fleet, reads his orders and places the U.S.S. ROWE (DD-564) in commission.

Commanding Officer addresses ship's company and guests.

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*(Continued from page 4)*  
The watch is set.

Chaplain speaks the benediction.

Ship's company and guests proceed forward to the mess hall for refreshments.

#### FINIS

*Space does not allow for the remainder of the program in this issue. However, it will continue in the February 2004.* \_\_\_\_\_

## LOOKING FOR...

*If you know the address of the following persons, please contact:*

*Mr. Carl Cramer  
2 E. Main St  
P.O. Box 98  
Newburg, PA 17240-0098  
Phone: 717-423-6425  
E-mail: thecramers@pa.net*

SMC George Kosko  
SMC Robert W. Stewart  
SO3 James Jones  
SOSN Jack Steely  
SOSN Charles Milner  
LT Richard P. Guthrie

**If there is someone you are looking for, please contact the newsletter at**  
**<mlrsnewsletters@aol.com> or**  
**P.O. Drawer 11399,**  
**Hickory, NC 28603**  
**Please state which ship he was aboard and the approximate time.**

## NAVY LOG

If you are entered in the Navy Log Memorial in Washington, D.C., please let either ML&RS or Carl Cramer (address above) know. It would be a big help in searching the Log.

We will continue printing your Navy Log entries in the February issue. Space limitations will not allow for any this month.

## COLORADO SPRINGS FOR 2004

Colorado Springs is an excellent reunion choice. The attractions are many and varied, actually too many to see in just the few days of a reunion. In order to give you the kind of reunion you want, not what we or the group leadership "think" you want, please take a few minutes and read over the brief description of activities and reunion format, then complete the attached survey and return it to ML & RS, Inc. Make your voice heard in determining what will be on the reunion agenda.

### ATTRACTIONS

**The US Air Force Academy:** The Air Force Academy is Colorado's most frequently visited man made attraction. Highlights of your visit will include touring the Visitor's Center, the Planetarium, the Cadet Field House, and the beautiful Cadet Chapel near where cadets march in their inspiring Noon Formation. At a lovely scenic overlook off North Gate Road you'll view Diamond Lil, the B52 Bomber.

**Garden of the Gods:** One of the most photographed sites in the United States. Located in area northwest of Colorado Springs previously occupied by the Pueblo and Navajo Indians. Garden of the Gods, a 1,300 acre park, is a Registered Natural Landmark. Here, where the Great Plains meet the Rockies, you will find fantastic red rock formations that tell a unique geological tale and an abundance of wildlife, flora and fauna. The Visitor's Center Museum and Trading Post is worth the trip. Don't miss this attraction.

**Royal Gorge Bridge and Park:** The Royal Gorge some 60 miles south of Colorado Springs is one of America's most spectacular attractions and is home to the world's highest suspension bridge, spanning the Arkansas River at a height of 1,053 feet. You can also go to the bottom of the gorge on the world's steepest incline

railway, or glide across the gorge on an aerial tramway.

**Pike's Peak:** Ride to the clouds! Board the Cog Railway for a trip you'll never forget. The Cog Railway is nine miles long and climbs to 14,110 feet passing through a panorama of breath-taking scenery. The train emerges from a sea of quaking aspens at the 11,578 foot level into the barren stretches of timberline. From the top you can see the red rocks of the Garden of the Gods miles below. On a clear day you can see Denver, some 75 miles to the north. This is the one thing in Colorado that you don't want to miss! If you have heart or respiratory problems check with your physician before making the ascent.

**Flying W Ranch:** If you've ever dreamed about cowboys and Indians, covered wagons and chuck-wagon suppers, this is the place for you. The Flying W offers its famous hospitality and entertainment in a romantic mountain setting. Enjoy a stroll through the authentic western town before supper. It's like going back to the 1800's. After a delicious meal sit back and be entertained by the Flying W Wranglers. This is a great Friday evening activity.

**Cripple Creek:** What's left of the Old West. An authentic old west town that has kept its self alive by tradition and casinos. The most famous building in Cripple Creek is the old "House of Commercial Affection", no longer in business. For an evening of games and entertainment and spectacular mountain scenery along the way, this is a great evening trip.

**Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine:** Step back 100 years and discover "The Richest Gold Camp on Earth" by touring two historic gold

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mine treasures of the “World’s Greatest Gold Camp” in Cripple Creek. Witness gold mining history. Tour the only vertical shaft gold mine tour in the United States, 1,000 feet underground. A perfect addition to a Cripple Creek gaming trip.

**U. S. Olympic Training Center:**

See prospective Olympic athletes training. Even though the next games are years away, the competition for a berth remains high.

**Seven Falls:** Called the “Grandest Mile of Scenery in Colorado.” Seven Falls, located in south Cheyenne Canyon highlights seven separate falls as they splash and tumble 181 feet down a sheer granite cliff. Alongside the falls a 224 step stairway leads to a nature train and a panoramic overlook. A mountain elevator transports visitors to the Eagle’s Nest observation platform.

**Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame:** To some, rodeo is a sport; to others, a business. Either way it is the only major competitive sport to evolve from a working lifestyle. This is the only museum in the world devoted to this sport. Live rodeo animals, the Hall of Fame Gallery, two multi-media shows and art exhibits await the visitor.

**Fort Carson and Peterson Air Force Base:**

Base tours are available, but for Navy personnel, the interest is questionable.

**Manitou Springs:** . At the foot of Pikes Peak, the town is known for its shops and healing springs. Seems like every few blocks there is an awful tasting spring. A glass full will cure whatever ails you!

**Old Colorado City:** The former capital of the Territory of Colorado. This city is full of western shops and history. Spending an hour or so here will give you a better appreciation of the old west.

**Western Museum of Mining and Industry:**

Explore Colorado’s rich and colorful mining past. Find out what’s happening in mining today. How does it compare to yesteryear? The museum’s 27-acre site includes four exhibit buildings. You can learn to pan for gold here and see how turn-of-the-century miners timbered, drilled, blasted, mucked and moved ore from the mine to the stamp mill where the ore was crushed and processed. This is a must see for old west fans.

**Buckskin Joe’s:** The wild west was never like this! Visit this old west town with various authentic buildings from the late 1800s Colorado Frontier. The buildings consist of exhibits of stores and businesses you would have seen back in the original town. Discover the secret of the mystery house if you dare to venture through it, definitely not for the faint of heart! Stop by the Silver Dollar Saloon and get a cold sarsaparilla, have your picture taken in period costume with a 100-year old camera, and witness an authentic shoot out in the street. All this and more at Buckskin Joe’s.

**Cave of the Winds:** In 1881 two young brothers on a church picnic discovered the Cave of the Winds, formed long ago within the Williams Canyon Limestone. The rare geological formation of a spectacular network of rooms and passageways encrusted with beautiful stalactites, stalagmites and flowstone curtains occurs nowhere else on earth. Since the day it was discovered, Cave of the Winds has become one of Colorado’s most popular and exciting scenic attractions.

*Now fill out and return the survey to the right and let us know your preferences in activities for your reunion.*

\_\_\_\_\_

**USS ROWE/WATTS 2004 SURVEY COLORADO SPRINGS**

*Please take a minute to complete this survey and help us plan your reunion according to your wishes.*

**THE REUNION**

Do you prefer a Welcome Reception the first evening of the reunion?  
Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do you prefer breakfast all three mornings \_\_\_\_\_  
or only on Sunday morning \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Would you prefer a Friday night dinner on your own \_\_\_\_\_,  
together in the hotel \_\_\_\_\_,  
or together off property \_\_\_\_\_?

Do you want entertainment after the banquet? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

**Please check the attractions you would like to see on your reunion agenda:**

- US Air Force Academy \_\_\_\_\_
- Manitou Springs \_\_\_\_\_
- Garden of the Gods \_\_\_\_\_
- Old Colorado City \_\_\_\_\_
- Royal Gorge Bridge and Park \_\_\_\_\_
- Western Museum of Mining and Industry \_\_\_\_\_
- Pikes Peak \_\_\_\_\_
- Flying W Ranch \_\_\_\_\_
- Cripple Creek \_\_\_\_\_
- Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine \_\_\_\_\_
- U. S. Olympic Training Center \_\_\_\_\_
- Seven Falls \_\_\_\_\_
- Ft Carson \_\_\_\_\_
- Peterson Air force Base \_\_\_\_\_
- Buckskin Joe’s \_\_\_\_\_
- Cave of the Winds \_\_\_\_\_

**Return surveys to:  
Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc.  
P.O Drawer 11399  
Hickory, NC 28603**

**or Fax;  
828-256-6559**

**RETURN BY JANUARY 12, 2004**