

THE DECKPLATE

Volume 3, Issue 3

February 2005

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS SCHOFIELD (DEG/FFG-3)



Points of Special Interest

- **Jack Knoblock has important information for you in the cover story.**
- **We have two new members of the Schofield roster. Welcome Mat on page three has their names.**
- **Sam Cotton shares his memory of July 20, 1969 in Mail Call on page three.**
- **Do you remember "Crossing the Line"? See how your experience compares to that of John Peterson on pages 3 & 4.**
- **The story of the collision of two ships is shared on page four.**

COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

Dear Schofield Family,

First let me say I hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday, and I look forward to 2005 as we plan for Schofield's fourth reunion. Now that the holidays are over, I have been reflecting on the planning and things that we need to think about for the future, and the present.

Although it was decided that the reunion would only be April 30th & May 1st, Friday April 29th will be open to check in, since many shipmates may be traveling some distance and may miss some of the program for Saturday. This will afford those the opportunity to avail themselves of

reduced room rates.

Since our last reunion it has become apparent to me that we need to shore up the way we raise monies and publish the "Deckplate." I have asked coordinators from the Ramsey and Brooke, but as of date have not received a reply. Some of my thoughts are that maybe we need to form an association and require annual dues. The amount would be small if the majority decided to be members. There could be a reduced rate for those that would wish to receive it by e-mail.

I know we agreed that there would be no formal tours arranged, but I found out that the "Blue Angels"

are performing at the Airbase on April 30th, so I have asked that be a part of the reunion package. In addition, John Deets, a former Schofield shipmate, e-mailed me awhile back offering his assistance for the reunion since he lives in the area, and he mentioned that he is a tour guide for the Yorktown.

Some of you have already received an e-mail from me regarding the possibility of a joint reunion with the Ramsey & Brooke in 2006. So far the feedback has been positive, and I have e-mailed the Ramsey & Brooke with that info, as well as mentioning the fact that we had planned on our next reunion to be held in

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Branson, MO, since it was central. To date I have not gotten a reply back, but I will again e-mail them, so we will have some information for planning purposes.

As usual, sometime Saturday we will be holding our business meeting to discuss these and other items. For those who will not be able to make the meeting or the reunion it is important that we get your feed back, so I am asking you to e-mail me at knoblockjack@hotmail.com Or call (802) 426-3314

or e-mail Robert Cichowski at robertathome53@hotmail.com,

Mark Fletcher at cfletcher@crocker.com

Lou Clark at navgoat@charter.net,

Mike Harper at MHARPER@cpintenet.com.

We need your input; it will help shape future events and activities for the Schofield.

My wife and I are looking forward to meeting again with old friends and meeting many new ones. Until we meet in Charleston, smooth sailing.

Jack Knoblock (Doc)

USS SCHOFIELD REUNION

APRIL 29—MAY 1,
2005

CHARLESTON, SC

**TOWN & COUNTRY
INN**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance after 10/04 issue
\$32.97
Funds received since 10/04 issue
\$525.00
Funds available for 02/05
\$557.97
Expended 02/05 newsletter
\$234.09
Balance for 06/05—\$323.88

Contributions should now be made to ML&RS, address at the bottom of this column.

A BIG THANK YOU!

The Deckplate Family would like to say a huge **THANK YOU to Ed Malchow** for providing the donation that made this publication possible. His one donation alone funded this entire issue!

We also want to thank Michael Jones, Patrick Pancoast, Gordon Sebring, John Winschel, Dorothy Schoenborn, Gary Guesto, William Shoots, Robert Cichowski, John Peterson, Michael Clark, Sam Cotton, Jack Knoblock and Abe Greenberg for their contributions that will make another issue possible. Thank you to all!

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

CORRECTION

The name of Domingo Abella was left off of the names in the 1970's group picture on page 4 of the Oct. 2004 issue. He is the first person on the right.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

This is the official publication of the USS Schofield Association. From now on 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 Schofield. A financial statement will appear in each of the following issues. **Send contributions to ML&RS, Inc. PO Drawer 11399, Hickory, NC 28603.**

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.

ML&RS, Inc is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be impossible to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

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.



WELCOME MAT

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

Harry Aldridge (1960's)
400 Corona Dr
Morgantown, WV 26508
Brenda.alridge@mailwvu.edu

Jerry Emmons EN3
Emm0sh0me@earthlink.net

in the Navy, especially now that we are again at war. It seems so strange that WWII was only twenty years before I enlisted, and it's now been over thirty-five since the day I left the Schofield. I vividly recall the helicopter from the carrier dropping down a line for me and my seabag. I was lifted into the chopper, put down on the flat top, strapped into an airplane, catapulted off the carrier, landed in DaNang where I stayed a few days waiting for my ride back home.

Sam Cotton ETN-2
USS Schofield DEG-3
Plankowner 1968-69
PO Box 296
Eagle River, Alaska 99577
Samc.er@gci.net

CROSSING THE LINE

The Pollywogs were up to something. They knew that their time had almost come and Shellback Day was tomorrow! We were preparing to cross the equator tomorrow afternoon, and that meant only one thing.....an initiation ceremony would be scheduled, making this WestPac in 1970 a truly memorable experience.

Rumor had it that sabotage had taken place in the garbage bins where old garbage had been stored for an upcoming ritual. Somehow a bottle had been broken into the mess and it would all need to be dumped.

On the day before we crossed the line the Pollywogs were winning. There were numerous salt water fights using the ships fire hoses. There were too many Pollywogs around to keep a watch on, and just when the salty Shellbacks started getting an upper hand, their water mysteriously was turned off allowing the opposing team of Pollywogs to take control and wash them away.

Their victories were short-lived however, because before we knew it, the Jolly Roger had been hoisted up, and the court of Davy Jones

had convened.

Everyone started out on the forecandle where they were made to crawl back to the fantail. Once there, charges were read against the slimy Pollywogs and they were forced to drink an obnoxious concoction brewed especially for this day.

You were then smacked on the rear with a piece of fire hose and directed towards the Royal Baby, where you were required to kiss his belly which was smeared with grease! And he would shout with glee as he pulled your awaiting lips into his belly, using your ears as handles, twisting with just the right amount of rotation to force grease up your nostrils and around your eyes.

From there you were herded back further onto the fantail to partake in other activities such as climbing through tanks filled with some kind of liquid, getting your hair "examined" while in the stocks, (which meant a generous portion of axle grease rubbed into your scalp) and of course, crawling through the infamous garbage chute (a tube made from several bed sheets sewn together and filled with rotten garbage). This was a favorite of the Shellbacks as they would make sure your face was pressed into the sloppy mess as you traversed through the piles of garbage, and vomit, while you gagged and puked your guts out just like the Pollywog ahead of you was doing. It really stunk in there, and I was glad that the real old garbage had been destroyed the day before. This was fresh garbage and it could have been much, much worse!

After completing the required activities you were hosed down with a saltwater fire hose. Many of the crew ripped their clothes off and deep-sixed them, as they were too full of garbage to ever wear again. The showers were next on the list as everyone was soaping up in an effort to remove the stink they had endured. The hardest to remove was the grease in your hair, and a

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MAIL CALL

Schofield Deckplate:

July 20, 1969. I was in a hospital in Japan, Yokusuka, I think, as a result of an infected sprained ankle. The Schofield headed out to sea without me, on some exercise with Japanese or SEATO ships and I was missing out. The up side was that I was able to watch TV and see Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon. Every year as that event is remembered in the news, I remember the Schofield. The ankle had been injured one night when a few of us had more than one ginger ale. As I recall I turned it as I was making my way at a dead run down some stairs, but instead of heading back to the ship, I continued on my way to the library and the ice cream social. The next morning I couldn't walk so Doc or one of his assistants got me some crutches. Going up and down the ladders wasn't working, so I was sent ashore.

My kids often ask about my years

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can of scouring powder worked best.

But wait! When you emerged from that hot shower, you had changed. You were no longer a slimy low life Pollywog, but a crusty loyal Shellback. You had been knighted by King Neptune himself and were now a part of his Royal Family.

Even the Captain, Frank Conlin participated as he had never crossed the line before. Technology had not invented the camcorder yet, but I did have a super-8 movie camera, and even though sound was not recorded, I have some shots of this event that will forever be remembered during my time aboard the mighty Schofield.

John Peterson, SM2
jppeterson@core.com

Editor's note: Does anyone know if this ritual is still practiced in today's Navy, seeing that women are now on board? If you know anything about what is done for "Crossing the Line" today, please write to us at: karenmlrs@charterinternet.com or at ML&RS, Inc. address on page two.

Also, we would like to hear of others experiences in "Crossing the Line." Was your experience the same, or were there differences?

AS I REMEMBER IT

After spending some relaxing time on deck with other shipmates during SEATO exercise in the South China Sea, I returned to Sickbay to turn in for the night. Suddenly at approximately 0340 the Skipper (Commander Graffam) came across the IMC to announce that he had just received communication that the Frank E. Evans and HMS Melbourne had been in a collision, and last report the Frank E. Evans was floating in two halves.

As I am sure I can speak for all the crew, a sick feeling came over me, as I asked the question to myself, "How could this happen in this vast open ocean, with waters like glass and a full moon?" Well, we all know the answer to that now, human error. The Skipper went on to say that we were proceeding to the accident site and would be assigned to search the outer perimeter for survivors. There were none! As part of my duties I readied the Battle Dressing Stations.

Once we reached the area, I was able to capture on my Super 8 the pictures off in the distance of the rear section of the Evans floating, as we had learned the front section sank within about two minutes, taking 77 sailors to the bottom of the South China Sea, for their final resting place. Also captured was the Melbourne, with a large gash in her bow.

One of the heroes who lost his life that day was the Chief Hospital Corpsman, who, with his pen light, returned to the Chief's Quarters to look for the Chief Electrician, who by the way, had already gotten out. A sad note is that the Chief Electrician's two sons were among the 77 that went to the bottom of the sea. Sadly, the Corpsman on the Evans was the only Hospital Corpsman in the Squadron I had never met. I understood later that he had extended his enlistment in order to make the cruise.

Reflecting back and wondering how did this happen, I am reminded that even though we operate in this vast sea, we still operate in a way that really, we are one command, but separate ships, sometimes requiring close encounters, as I can remember two others, one with the Larsen (actually colliding with an oiler) and another when we were escorting the Bonny Dick out of the South China Sea.

This is how I remember that fateful morning.

Jack Knoblock
HMCS (AC) USN Retired

FROM THE USS SCHOFIELD CRUISE BOOK 1977-78 OF THE WESTPAC CRUISE—7 MONTHS

STATISTICS:

Miles steamed.....	34,928
Lbs beef consumed.....	25,000
Lbs pork consumed.....	7,600
Lbs poultry consumed.....	7,000
Gallons milk consumed.....	8,000
Lbs vegetables consumed...	25,000
Lbs fruit consumed.....	11,200
Cans of soda.....	96,000
Eggs.....	70,000
Bars of soap.....	1,358
Gal. feed water made.....	897,964
Gal. potable water made.	1,298,676
Funds expanded, not including paydays.....	\$1,786,686

Submitted by Abe Greenberg
Capt. USN (Ret)
Schofield '76-'78

CHARLESTON FACTS

- Charleston lies on the tip of a peninsula at the confluence of the Ashley and Cooper Rivers.
- Charleston was founded in 1670 by a group of English aristocrats as a specifically money-making venture, serving the rice and cotton plantations.
- The Civil War started at Fort Sumter in the Charleston harbor.
- The city has been devastated by a fire in 1861, Union troops in 1865, a catastrophic earthquake in 1886 and Hurricane Hugo in 1989.
- The Gullah culture, indigenous to the Sea Islands of SC and GA, is highly visible in the Charleston area. Many people speak the distinctive Gullah dialect.
- "Basket ladies" weave their famous sweetgrass baskets all around the market in downtown Charleston.