

THE DECKPLATE

Volume 4, Issue 1

September 2005

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



Points of Special Interest

- *Jack Knoblock has some important information for you in his column on the cover.*
- *Robert Cichowski shares his reflections on the last reunion with you on page three under Mail Call.*
- *Ken Wilson also has a heart-warming story to share about the generosity of a shipmate's widow. See his story beginning on page three.*
- *Larry Eckard reports on some ways to help cut your reunion costs in the future. See his article on page four.*

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Dear Schofield Family,

Although summer is almost over in many parts of the country, it doesn't feel like it. It has been one of our busiest times, these past months with our recent move to Idaho after being in one spot for 22 years. So far it has been a very exciting move, and we love our new home. We have already been visited by Jim & Susie Borowicz, John Winschel, Ken Wilson and Sha. It was great to have some of my former shipmates drop by, and our door is always open to any of you traveling out this way and wish to stay in a beautiful part of Idaho. President Bush recently visited our

area and stayed at The Tamarack Ski Area near us.

Good news! I have just spoken to Brenda at Military Locator/Reunion Service and we have finally secured a site for our next reunion in **Reno**. It will be held **May 4-7** at the **Hilton**, which consists of 114 acre complex with the largest KOA Park, for those with RV's.

An issue has come up regarding dues – I should say just a little glitch. Robert, our treasurer, has been waiting until he got enough dues to open a Bank Account in Schofield's Name. Well, he tried, and I should have known, they wouldn't let him without a tax exempt

number. It was poor thinking on my part. I should have realized we would need to apply for a 501C status. My experience in the non-profit world tells me this is not practical at the present. I have asked Robert to return those checks made out to the Schofield Association and ask you to make the checks out directly to him **Robert Cichowski**, with notation in the memo section of your check (Schofield Dues). This is a trust thing, but at the present it is the only practical way for dues to be handled. **Note:** Those that paid their dues at the last reunion will not have their checks returned since all those monies went to

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ML&RS for support of the Deckplate.

Another area that I want to pass along is that, as you might know, as coordinator I am contacted, by various organizations peddling services etc. In the past I have received inquiries regarding hats and patches. Hats can be ordered through Military Locators, but to get the ones many of us purchased through Rick Cohagan takes about a three month lead time. Regarding the Schofield Patch, I have the art work for the DEG Patch, but not for those that served with FFG designator, so if that is an issue, and folks want the FFG Patch, I will need the art work. As with anything of this type, the number of orders dictates the price, so please e-mail me at knoblockjack@hotmail.com or write me at P. O. Box 464, Cascade, ID 83611, or call @ (208) 382-3771.

For those shipmates and our fellow Americans that have recently experienced the wrath of hurricane Katrina, our hearts and prayers go out to them. If there is a former shipmate that has been affected, and is able to contact me, please do so, I am sure your fellow shipmates would help where they can.

From the feed back I am getting, this next reunion in Reno should be our biggest one yet. My wife and I are looking forward to getting together again with all of you and meeting up with new faces at our next reunion. We wish all of you good health, and smooth sailing, until we meet again.

Jack Knoblock (Doc)

ASSOCIATION DUES

Those who have not already paid their \$10.00 association dues should send a check made out to **Robert Cichowski** and mail to:

Robert Cichowski, Treasurer
386 Holly Ridge Rd
Winter Haven, FL 35880-1113

FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance after 06/05 issue

\$847.17

Funds received since 06/05 issue

\$60.00

Funds available for 09/05

\$907.17

Expended 09/05 newsletter

\$284.40

Balance for 12/05—\$622.77

Contributions should be made to Robert Cichowski and sent to Robert Cichowski, Treasurer, 386 Holly Ridge Rd, Winter Haven, FL 11113.

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

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 the association. Your dues are greatly appreciated. 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 Robert Cichowski, 386 Holly Ridge Rd, Winter Haven, FL 11113.**

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.

USS SCHOFIELD REUNION
MAY 4-7, 2006
RENO, NEVADA
HILTON HOTEL



WELCOME MAT

The following shipmate has 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:

*John Piatt (1981-85) SGT 2
1401 2nd Ave N Apt 103
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379-2728
320-240-0673*

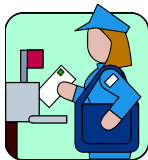


TAPS

The Schofield Deckplate has learned of the following death since the last newsletter. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family and friends of the deceased.

*Jon Brostad (1985-87) MMCM
Date of death not reported*

Anyone who knows or learns of a shipmate's death, you are requested to notify the newsletter so that person can be listed in TAPS and also on the Honor Roll at the next reunion.



MAIL CALL

A REUNION REFLECTION

The USS Schofield (DEG-3/FFG-3) just completed its fourth reunion in Charleston, SC. It was also our first reunion on the East

Coast.

At first anyone attending might wonder why attend at all. There were only 14 shipmates, most of them plank owners, and we had only 11 better-halves along. However, that was in the beginning on the first day of the two and an half day event. Yet being as small as we were, we had so much fun. Much more so than the other three reunions. And not just telling stories, however, there were a few of those. Our better halves are looking forward to our next reunion in Reno, NV in May of 2006, for I strongly believe that they had more fun then we did. We also had a very distinguished shipmate attend.

Captain Frank Conlon arrived Saturday night for our formal banquet and said a few words that meant a great deal to me—more than I would have thought because I never served under him. In fact, he was two skippers before my time. Basically, he said that he had served on nine different ships and had never gone to a reunion. That Saturday night was the first, and his wife had just undergone some major surgery and she was over a hundred miles away. But he said that the "Schofield was not the hardest or the easiest or anything really, but she was fun!" And that night we had more fun and laughed more than I believe all the other reunions combined. Yes, there were bumps in the road when we all served, that I am sure of. But the reason I did go back in and retired was because I had followed this man's advice and never really knew it. I did my best to have fun! And make a difference to those around me besides.

This also brings me to another point I wish to make quickly. These past four reunions I have had the honor and privilege of doing the Memorial Service. Those that were there the first time know it was not easy for me. In the baseball game of life, I myself have already passed second base. Many of our shipmates that have been struck

out in the baseball game of life did not even make it to second base, much less third. We are a finite group, and there will be no more Schofield crew. We are a family. The Schofield did that to us, and my heart is warmed by that. As one shipmate put it, "It was the worst of times. It was the best of times." Meeting other shipmates that I only heard stories of like this past time or meeting some that had come after me, enriches my life. And I wish to thank you, my shipmates, for that unique experience. I am a better person for it!! For those of you who keep putting off reunions for whatever reason, the price may become too high. Go and have FUN and remember that you are part of a unique family.

Fair winds and following seas,
Robert Cichowski
STG2/STGC USN (RET)

Deckplate,

I wanted to share a heart warming story with all of my shipmates. While serving on the Schofield I had BT2 Bill Farris working for me in the fire-room. Bill was a good engineer and was a good friend and coworker. I lost contact with Bill after leaving the Schofield, and only after going to my first Schofield reunion did I find out that the Farris family lived within two hundred miles of me. I called their home only to discover that Bill had passed away from a heart attack. I passed along my condolences to his wife Wanda and asked her to stay in touch with me.

Wanda came by my house this summer, and we talked about the good ole days on the Schofield. In passing I mentioned that my Schofield cruise book had burned in a fire in 1989. I also told Wanda that she should attend a Schofield reunion, and that she would enjoy being around our friends of thirty years ago. We parted with the promise to stay in touch.

Last month I received a call from Wanda telling me that she had decided to give me Bill's cruise book. I

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objected and told her that it was an important part of her family's history and that she should keep the book for her children as a reminder of their father. Her answer was that the best time of her life with Bill was her years in the Navy and the Schofield in particular. She had discussed the issue with her family and decided the cruise book would be better appreciated if I took possession of it and shared it with other shipmates at future reunions.

I am newly amazed at the generosity of people whom I have served with over my twenty year career. Wanda touched my heart with her kind act. I will treasure this new cruise book much more than my original, because it was an act of kindness that brought it to me. Thank you, Wanda.

Ken Wilson
BT1, USS Schofield 1968-71

RISING REUNION COSTS

Larry H Eckard, President, ML & RS, Inc

Anyone paying attention to the reunion costs have seen a sharp rise in past two years, and you're probably concerned about them. We are just as concerned as you are because it does no good to plan a wonderful reunion and price it so high that people can't afford to attend.

First let me make it very clear that we (ML&RS, Inc) have not increased our fees. The rising costs are 100% due to the increased cost of hotels, food & beverage, tours, entertainment, etc. We cannot control those costs, but we still get the best possible rates—better than you can get for your self—and pass them on to you.

Although prices have increased all across the country, some areas are still more expensive than others. Our on site representative has a ton of information about potential reunion sites so take advantage of

it; let our representative answer questions about locations in your meeting when it's time to discuss reunion sites.

Also, in every hospitality room you will find a blue three-ring binder notebook full of information about potential reunion sites. The book gives you suggestions for tours and/or activities, information about at least one hotel, an itinerary and cost sheet from a recent reunion if one has been held in that city. Look over that book.

Here is some other information that you may find helpful. Option A (arriving on Thursday and departing on Sunday) for a couple is used as the standard for the prices that are cited below. There are of course some exceptions to the prices, depending upon the time of year and the other activities going on in the city at the same time.

In any of the following cities (and this is not a complete list) you can expect to pay a minimum of \$740.00 and as much as \$800.00: Baltimore/Washington, DC; Charleston, SC; Savannah, GA; Boston, MA; Newport, RI; Charleston, SC; San Antonio, TX; San Francisco or San Diego, CA; Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; Chicago, IL; New York, NY; Dallas, TX; Nashville, TN; Minneapolis/St Paul.

If you choose a city like one of these, you're going to pay top dollar, expect it and don't be surprised when it happens. Room rates are going to be near \$100.00 plus tax.

In the following cities you can expect to pay a minimum of \$665.00 upward to \$725.00: Myrtle Beach, SC; Norfolk, VA; St Louis, Mo, Tucson, AZ; Albuquerque, NM; Colorado Springs, CO; Milwaukee, WI; Harrisburg/Lancaster, PA; New Orleans, LA; Pensacola, FL; Reno, NV; Branson, MO; Columbus OH; Pittsburgh, PA; Omaha, NE; Cincinnati, OH/Northern KY; Buffalo, NY; Corpus Christi, TX.

Room rates will range between \$75.00-90.00 plus tax.

In the following cities you can expect to pay a minimum of \$625.00 upward to \$675.00: Biloxi, MS; Asheville, NC; Fargo, ND.

Room rates will probably be below \$75.00 plus tax.

For the past several years, Jacksonville, FL is the least expensive reunion city in the country with room rates in the \$60's and total package around \$600.00. If you haven't been there and cost is a concern, you should give Jacksonville strong consideration.

In any city no downtown hotels ever have complimentary airport shuttle service, and many have daily parking fees of \$12.00 and more. Hotels nearer the airport usually do not have parking fees and generally have complimentary airport shuttle service.

Here are some other points you may wish to consider. There are hundreds of military reunions held every year. The vast majority are held in April and May or September or October. *They don't have to be!* Passover, Palm Sunday, and Easter usually (but not always) fall in April; Mother's Day and Memorial Day weekends are in May. So with these holidays, the reunions are crammed into the remaining available weeks—and do you think for an instant that hotels don't know this and price accordingly? Labor Day weekend, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are in September or October and it's the same thing. You can move your reunion forward to mid-late March (depending upon the location) and you'll get a better deal; the same with early November. Also, some groups ask for specific dates, without ever knowing what else is going on at the same time in your city of choice. We can help you best when there is a two or three week window to work in.

If you take this information into account when you make the decision on where to hold your next reunion, you won't be nearly as surprised when you see the prices.