

THE DECKPLATE

Volume 6, Issue 3

September 2008

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



COORDINATOR'S COLUMN

Dear Schofield Family,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I'm Ron Spagna from Pittsburgh, Pa. I am a Plankowner and was aboard from 1968 until 1971. As you may know we started in the yards in Seattle, WA and migrated over to Bremerton, WA, finally homeporting in Long Beach, CA. Subsequently of course, our ship went down to San Diego and finished up there after 20 years. I was an FTM2 and worked in the missile gang on the 51C missile radar. I am an 8 year Navy veteran and very proud of having served my country on 2 ships. One, the USS John King (DDG-3), was homeported in Norfolk, VA. The other of course was the USS Schofield, DEG3. I have been selected as the Coordinator of the Schofield family group.

We just spent this past weekend in San Diego with our Schofield family. It was our 40th anniversary reunion since the Schofield was commissioned. This was my 4th reunion and the best yet. I say that after each one and I truly mean it. We took a harbor cruise on a civilian boat, the Hornblower, and it was super.

Typical San Diego weather from what I was told and a great picture taking day. The reunion was the third for my wife Frani, and I believe she feels every bit as I and many do about our reunions. They are a work in progress. New faces each year to add to the family album! Some of us also went aboard the USS Preble while our guests shopped or found a casino or just relaxed at the hotel. Seeing one of the newer ships was quite an eye opener. Many of us were truly awed by the whole thing. Lots of changes since our days aboard the Schofield and very interesting. We also had a chance to go aboard the Midway. Lots of history there and quite a tour of the ship.

We sort of had the old, the middle aged, and the baby of the Navy ships. It truly was a great experience and a good education for all of us.

Lastly regarding the reunion in San Diego, I would like to thank all who attended for helping make it a memorable experience for myself, my wife, and many others. It truly is a heartwarming experience and one I look forward to each year. It really is

the people who attend who make it be what it is. Many were missed for various reasons and I hope that they are all well and doing OK. Remember we have another coming up in 2009. Our thanks to Phyllis and Joyce and the ML & RS staff who really make it go smoothly. Their assistance allows us to have more time and just enjoy!!!! Thank you all!

We talked about the Deckplate, our newsletter. Just a reminder that there are different ways to access it. One being by regular mail. Another by email after giving ML & RS your email address. Another is to access their website. There is a dropdown click for access to the Deckplate. Fortunately we have options so any one can get the Deckplate if they'd like. Just sign up with ML & RS. If anyone can get the word to other shipmates, please do so. This is one way we can continue to sustain contact with our shipmates and their loved ones.

Last, but not least I'd like to extend my thanks to Jack and Sandie Knoblock. They have put in countless

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hours helping our association in many ways. Jack is one squared away sailor and Sandie is a ball of fire. They are both so welcoming as my wife and I will attest to. Jack has turned over the

reigns as he felt it was time. However, he is not off the hook completely. We expect him and Sandie to be at future reunions and I expect to take some counsel and advice from him. I'm sure

you all wish him and Sandie well and a job well done for their fine service!

Respectfully
Ron Spagna

USS SCHOFIELD CELEBRATES ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY IN SAN DIEGO

Twenty-three former sailors on the USS Schofield (DEG/FFG-3) and fifteen of their guests celebrated the 40th anniversary of their ship in San Diego, CA on September 4-7, 2008 at the Handlery Hotel. Following early Thursday afternoon registration, the festivities began at 5:00 PM with a Welcome Reception held at the hotel pool area. Light hors d'oeuvres and beverages were available as everyone got acquainted or were reunited with old friends. After the reception, a group set out for Hunters Steak House for dinner to celebrate the 21st wedding anniversary of Dawn and Edward Malchow. Others returned to the Hospitality Room for some great conversation and reminiscing before retiring for the evening.

At 9:00 AM Friday morning, everyone was up and ready for a great day of sightseeing with the San Diego city tour. Highlights of the tour included Coronado Island, the historic Balboa Park, the downtown Gaslamp District, Old Town, a one hour harbor cruise, lunch at the beautiful harbor side restaurant, the Bali Hai, and a visit to the USS Midway museum ship. The USS Midway had a 47-year career of service to our country, from commissioning in 1945 to serving as a flagship in Desert Storm in 1991. The exhibits ranged from aircraft to replicated berthing compartments. It was a tiring day, but well worth it! Everyone was pretty much spent after the tour and were ready for some refreshments in the Hospitality Room and some relaxation before the evenings activities. "South of the Border" was the theme for the evening's activities. Just for fun, everyone was asked to dress in authentic Mexican attire for dinner. Congratulations to Carol and Mark Fletcher, winners of the costume contest. After the Mexican Fiesta meal, a game of "Name That Tune" was played for some after dinner entertainment. This time congratulations went out to Paul Taylor and Theresa Cox as winners of the "Name That Tune" contest. It was an enjoyable evening, topping off a great day of sight-

seeing!

Saturday was another full day of activities for the Schofield sailors and guests. After breakfast on one's own, the tour to the Naval base and an active duty ship for the gentlemen or shopping at Seaport Village for the ladies was on its way. The men enjoyed reliving their "glory days" while touring the active duty ship, USS Preble, and seeing how the Navy has changed since those days. Since some of the women were not too eager to see yet another ship, the tour coach dropped many of them off at Seaport Village for some shopping and browsing. It was the best of both worlds for those who have different interests. After the men toured the USS Preble, the motor coach brought them back to Seaport Village to meet up with the ladies for a picnic-style boxed lunch. The group returned to the hotel around 3:00 PM, and the annual business meeting began shortly after their return. At the business meeting a change in leadership was made. Ron Spagna was chosen to lead the group for the next year as president/coordinator. Carol Fletcher will continue as Secretary. Nashville, Tennessee was chosen as the 2009 reunion site. After a few hours of leisure, it was time for the 6:30 PM pre-dinner cocktail hour and photo session. Photos of each couple or individual, as well as group pictures, were taken as everyone enjoyed their favorite beverage and caught up on the day's events. Then at 7:30 PM the most anticipated event of the reunion — the banquet honoring the 40th Anniversary of the USS Schofield (DEG/FFG-3) — began with the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance. Outgoing Chairman Jack Knoblock welcomed the group and then introduced Ron Spagna as the new coordinator. Each shipmate then introduced himself and his guest and told what he remembered most about his tour on the USS Schofield. Irwin "Rick" Martin, Jr. gave the invocation and then dinner was served. Following the meal, Captain Abe Green-

berg, who had served as a commander of the Schofield, gave a talk on "Words of Wisdom" about the ship. Kenneth Wilson read a letter from John Winschell on why he could not attend the reunion. He has many health issues, but sent his best wishes to everyone. A picture commemorating the 40th anniversary of the USS Schofield was presented to each member by Irvin "Rick" Martin, Jr. Thank you so much, Rick, for your generosity and thoughtfulness! The Memorial Service commemorating those sailors from the USS Schofield who have passed away was held after the banquet activities. Rick Martin was in charge of the service, Ron Spagna read the names of the those deceased since the last reunion and Mark Fletcher rang the bell as the names were read. In closing remarks, everyone was invited to attend the 2009 reunion in Nashville, Tennessee on Sept 17—19. For those leaving early Sunday morning, it was now time to say good bye and to wish everyone well for another year.

About 20-25 people were able to gather together on Sunday morning for a good bye breakfast and a last handshake or hug. It had been a great reunion, honoring a great ship and crew, and we hope to see everyone back next year in Nashville, TN.

2008 REUNION ATTENDEES

Michael Bayliss
James & Susie Borowicz
Dennis Cahoon
June Cruse
Charles Dickens
Wanda Farris
Mark & Carol Fletcher
Daniel & Judy Gnade
Andrew & Kathleen Golden
Abe Greenberg
Jack & Sandie Knoblock

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- Charles Knowles
- Edward & Dawn Malchow
- Irwin & Valarie Martin
- Chuck Murtomaki
- James & Pamela Pate
- Allen & Mary Personette
- Romeo & Myrna Ricarte
- Jonathan & Winnie Sage
- Ron & Frani Spagna
- Paul Taylor & Theresa Cox
- John & Harriett Walters
- Kenneth Wilson & Shamarie Dixson
- Lee Witham

Total Members: 25
Guests: 15
GRAND TOTAL: 40



Some of the Schofield men at the USS Schofield banquet

TREASURER'S REPORT 2008- Robert Cichowski, Treas.

Treasurer's reporting error in dues
 —Jack Knoblock \$20.00

Total Funds \$1,121.92

Dues collected 12/27/07

- David Maass \$40.00
- Don Depiero \$40.00
- James Perry \$20.00

Deckplate Funding \$361.46

TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION \$860.46

Dues Collected 1/22/08

- Richard Gray \$25.00
- Rick Martin \$40.00
- Larry Southworth \$20.00
- Earl Burks \$20.00
- John Piatt \$40.00

TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION \$1,005.46

Dues collected 2/14/08

- Kenneth Kotera \$20.00
- John Neumeister \$60.00
- Steve Mikle \$20.00
- Neil Buck \$30.00
- David Burris \$20.00
- David Johnson \$20.00
- John Harris \$20.00
- Chuck Knowles \$20.00

TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION \$1,235.46

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The Schofield ladies enjoy dressing up for the banquet.



The Schofield men enjoy touring San Diego

SCHOFIELD REPRESENTATIVES

Ron Spagna, Coordinator
151 Shearer Rd
New Kensington, PA 15068
724-681-2168
E-mail: ron6978@comcast.net

Carol Fletcher, Secretary
469 Country Club Rd
Greenfield, MA 01301
413-773-3211
E-mail: mcfletcher@verizon.net

Robert Cichowski, Treasurer
386 Holly Ridge Rd
Winter Haven, FL 33880
863-293-5023
E-mail: robertathome53@hotmail.com

John Winschel, Chaplain
250 Grandview Ave
Grants Pass, OR 97527
541-479-2483
E-mail: jmwwon1@msn.com



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:

Charles Nagel, RM2
26643 Amada St
Hemet, CA 92545

Published By:
Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc
PO Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603

828-256-6008 (voice)
828-256-6559 (fax)

Dinamlrs@charterinternet.com
Karenmlrs@charterinternet.com
www.mlrsinc.com/schofield (web site)

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



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.

Stephen Danzis
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.

Financial Statement

The cost of this issue is **\$594.00**. This newsletter is being mailed to 350 members.

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Chairman: Jack Knoblock
Treasurer unable to attend this year.
Current balance \$725.08
Secretary minutes accepted as read.

Nominations for new chairman were taken and Ron Spagna was unanimously voted in. He graciously accepted the responsibility. (We're all behind you, Ron.)

Dues are \$20.00 each year. They are due June 1st.

Anyone wishing to submit an article to the Deckplate should submit it to the coordinator at ron6978@comcast.net or mail to his address above.

Our biggest cost is mailings. One way to help with that is to receive the Deckplate via e-mail or go to ML&RS web site and look for the current issue. <http://www.mlrsinc.com/schofield/index.htm>. If you would like to receive the Deckplate via e-mail, you must let ML&RS know.

Several locations were discussed for next year. We are tentatively looking at Nashville, Sept. 17-20.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol A. Fletcher

LADIES' CORNER

Hello from Pittsburghhh!

Well, another reunion gone by! We had such a wonderful time. I just love you girls (and guys)!!! You are the most fun-loving bunch of people, what a great time we had. You are truly my Navy family. The first reunion I went to in Reno was "iffy" for me as I didn't know anyone. I felt like everyone knew each other and I felt funny going. You girls (and guys) really made me feel welcome. I didn't know if I'd be allowed to come back after I spilled my water on Mark and John Winschel at the dinner cruise. So given another chance, we went to San Antonio the following year and had even more fun. Not only did I feel completely a part of things, so did my son, who drove down from Abilene where he is stationed in the Air Force. He had so much fun he wanted to join us this year, but is now in Kuwait. This year was the absolute best!!! Just a blast!!! The whole week end was so much fun! Judy drove us to the ca-

sino and Dawn treated us all to lunch with her winnings!!! I can't express in words how much all of you mean to me and I know Ron feels the same (he can write his own letter). I am so glad to be a part of your group. I don't know if Ron can fill Jack's shoes, but I know he will give it his best. (If he has a Mexican dinner planned for us, we can throw him overboard). Thank you, thank you... Oh, in case you don't know it, I just love you girls!!! (and guys too).

Love,
Frani Spagna

P.S. To those of you who heard me commenting on all the "speedos" worn at the pool, NO, I didn't go out and get one for Ron. They didn't have his color!!!

TALES OF LEAVING THE NAVY

“What was the process of leaving the Navy like? Was there any kind of ceremony, or did you just pack your sea bag and walk off the ship? Did you have any kind of celebration, either with your Navy buddies or back at home? How was your trip home?”

These questions were posed by e-mail to USS Mississippi Shipmates and we are happy to publish the following responses:

Nathan Sturre:

We didn't have any celebrations on the ship. We packed our bags and left the ship. If we crossed under the Coronado Bay Bridge coming back into port just before we got out some would throw their dress cap overboard as we passed under the bridge. That was stopped about 1980 though, maybe the next captain allowed it again, but the word was that the port people didn't want us littering any more.

Some guys would leave their shoes and ball cap on the quarter deck as they left and at the end of the day the watch would dispose of them. The meaning was that they were so short you couldn't see them anymore. Get it? Ha ha...short-timer.

I tried to stay in but when it was time to re-enlist they were so full that the only thing I could get was the Schofield for another 4 years. I was brand new married so I didn't want that. So, it was a sad day when I got out.

My dad came out to Cali to help me drive home. We drove straight through from Cali to Minnesota —28 hours. I started to look for work the next day. No hoopla. Of course back then you couldn't buy a job, but that is another story.

Andrew Golden:

I think I had an interesting discharge. Prior to being discharged from the ship, I went on 30 days of Shore Patrol at the 32nd Street Naval Base, Schofield's home port. Shore Patrol duty was at night and I had to live in the barracks during that time. Well, not wanting to get out of the Navy looking like I was just discharged, I borrowed a short wig from someone and started tucking my hair under it for inspection before patrol. On the day of my discharge, I reported to the Captain who gave me the usual speech and then dismissed me. As I walked down the gangway from the ship, I removed my wig and let my 30

day growth hang out. Granted, it wasn't much, but it seemed like it.

Later that day, we tapped a couple of kegs of beer at Doyle Van Deman's house and proceeded to party. The next day, former HM2 Doc Benham and I drove up to Long Beach where I was ready to start looking for a civilian job. That was the last time I saw the Schofield until the day former STG2 Jon Sage and I, both civilians, came back for the decommissioning ceremony in 1988.

Thomas Denny:

I transferred from the Schofield to another duty station. When I left the ship I packed my sea bag and went on leave back home enroute to the next duty station. Do not remember any party or fanfare leaving the ship.

To leave the Navy, three of us had to complain to the officer in charge that now that we were back in the U.S. and all had enough leave on the books (60 days) why could we not get out. We did our time. He was an Army Captain who went to the Personnel/Yeoman and told him we had all better be out by the end of the week.

I had been away from my parents for a few years and on my discharge, they met me at the airport. I looked at them and thought, "My, they sure look old!"

Michael Clark:

When I left the Schofield I had re-enlisted for orders to the US Naval Communications Station, Londonderry, Northern Ireland. This was a difficult time for Northern Ireland since the troubles had flared up. I was here for 2½ years and couldn't wait to get back to the states. It was a very dangerous time here for everyone.

When I left NCS Londonderry, I went to NavRadSta Northwest in Chesapeake, Virginia, which brought me to the end of my enlistment. As was/is Navy procedure, they tried and tried to get me to re-enlist, but I didn't want it. After constant hounding from my division officer, I made a deal with him. Since I had just come from Londonderry, I just knew they wouldn't send me back. I made a deal with the division officer and told him that I'd re-enlist for another 4 years if they gave me orders to Londonderry. On the other hand, I told him that if I didn't get orders to Londonderry, I'd get out and the deal was sealed with a

handshake.

Two weeks later I got a call in my barracks room to report to the division officer ASAP. So I go down to his office and he said, "Are you ready to sign?" I told him no and he said "Oh, yes you are. Here's your orders to NavCommSta Londonderry." Needless to say, I was quite upset.

In 1980, I was assigned to the USS Hoel, which again brought me to the end of another enlistment. Not going into any detail, I'm surprised that ship was still floating and/or in operation. I got out of the Navy real quick. There was no ceremony and no party back home. There was just a lost feeling.

Realizing that I only had another 6 years to retirement, I decided to go back in the Navy and was assigned to the USS South Carolina (CGN-37). I swapped to the USS California (CGN-36) because it was being homeported on the West Coast and I wanted to make another WESTPAC cruise. The ship never went on a cruise.

I developed a medical problem that I had to get checked out at the Navy hospital in Oakland, Calif. The doctor immediately pulled me off the ship. After an operation and some recovery time, I went to NTC/RTC San Diego as a RM "A" school instructor. I retired from there. I didn't have a party or any kind of a ceremony since I'm not into a big scene for things like that. The only thing that happened was a very small presentation in the commander's office to give me awards. I think there were three of my fellow instructors there.

The trip home was great. I always wanted to drive across country, so I bought a pick-up truck in San Diego and drove from San Diego to Jersey City, NJ. I was kept entertained along the way by the Moody Blues and Pink Floyd. I stopped in Clyde, Texas and visited an old shipmate that I was stationed with in Londonderry, which was quite good.

After I got home, it was difficult finding a job. I moved from New Jersey to Indiana and back to NJ. I then went from NJ to Ohio and from Ohio back to Indiana in search of a job, but with no luck. I finally landed a job in Clinton, Maryland and moved from Indiana to Maryland where I resided from 1988-2000. In December 2000 I moved to Londonderry, Northern Ireland where I still am today. I came here in the hopes of going to the Union Theological Col-

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lege in Belfast to become a Presbyterian minister. Unfortunately, that didn't work out either, but I'm still here doing volunteer work with the local youth clubs and the elderly.

Being a civilian had its ups and downs. I was totally lost and didn't know what to do with myself. I wasn't used to not having a routine like that in the Navy. In 1991 at the start of the first Gulf War, four of my co-workers, also retired Navy, and I tried to get back in the Navy to go to the Gulf. The recruiter laughed at us and said we were too old.

Anyway, it took me approximately 5 years to readjust to the civilian world. I've held some good jobs working for government contractors for the Navy. The best job I held was working on the Navy's new Aegis project teaching the radiomen and writing the operating manuals for the communications systems and equipment. Now at 61 years of age, it's time to truly retire and settle down. I hope to go back to the states soon and settle down somewhere in South Carolina. Who knows, I may find a job somewhere on the base in Charleston, ya think?

Jon Sage:

A few days before my departure date, I was asked to go to the Captain's cabin for my exit interview. When I got there I couldn't help but notice there was an armed guard in the passageway outside his cabin! I was a little worried about what sort of techniques he was going to use to get me to re-up. Captain Almstedt had a briefcase on his desk. As I sat down he gave the usual pitch about how the Navy needed good Sonar Techs and I could have a great career ahead of me. Then he opened the briefcase and said, "This is what I'm paying the crew today. It's about \$30K." He then grabbed about a third of it and said, "This is yours if you re-enlist for 6 more years." I must admit for a few milliseconds, I considered it! That was a lot of cash to have right in front of you. Luckily I came to my senses, thanked him for the offer, and told him I had other plans. He accepted defeat graciously, thanked me for my service, and wished me good luck.

John Hevez:

My coming home in October 1969 was perhaps a made for TV movie. Here I was, alone in downtown Chicago late at night. This is what happened: I called home from Long Beach, Califor-

nia. My brother answered and said everyone was happy I was on my way home in one piece. He also said they were very busy. He was working and going to college; my father was working also. The rest of the family was away at school. I come from a family of eleven and my mother wasn't able to drive. My brother suggested I take a flight out of Long Beach. I then would be able to make a connection to grab a Greyhound bus ride to Gary, Indiana. At that time he would pick me up at the bus depot located there.

My plane landed at O'Hare Airport at about 6:00 PM. I found the Greyhound bus bound for downtown Chicago. I paid my fare and settled in. I had no idea what would be in store for me next. The bus stopped somewhere around Monroe Ave. Unknown to me, this was a very bad neighborhood. I thought I'd catch my connection for a bus to Gary soon. I inquired for a ticket to Gary. It was due in about an hour, so I decided to wait. There were a lot of people outside who just seemed to be milling around. I had my sea bag and two suitcases with civilian clothes. One was really big so I set it down next to me. About 5 minutes later a man asked where I was going. I said, "I'm taking a bus to Gary, Indiana." He said he had a taxi to take me there. I said okay. Meanwhile, I see my large case going down the street in the hands of another man. I yelled for him to stop. I ran as fast as I could after him. He dropped the case and left down the subway, escaping. I then went back to the bus depot and was stopped by other men. They asked me what had happened. I said I just retrieved this case. They asked, "Who was the man you were talking to earlier?" I said I didn't know him but he offered me a ride to Gary, Indiana. They said, "Did he say how and when?" I said, "Yes, he'll be back soon with a taxi." They replied, "You shouldn't go with him. He'll probably cut your throat!" I said, "Wait a minute. Who the hell are you guys?" They showed me a badge and 38 pistols, and told me they were undercover cops looking for drug dealers and other criminals in the area. At first I didn't know if to believe them, but they convinced me to put my bags in the trunk of their car and wait to see if the man would return. Within about 10 minutes he showed up. They stopped him and started to ask him questions. I could see it was a phony cab because the sign on the taxi was connected to the lighter in the car and the wire ran through the window. During the proc-

ess of questioning him, he went into his pocket. They struggled with and put him to the ground. Out of his pocket was a razor blade! It was probably meant for me. I'll be ever grateful to those two police officers who were there that night! I'll never thank them enough if I ever find out who they were. They took me to the South Shore train station where it would be safer. My brother picked me up from there. It's been kinda rough going, and my experiences in the Navy were pretty tough too, but they are nothing compared to what happened to me that night in Chicago. I hope this letter gives some insight in what could happen to someone coming home from the military service. I think the military should provide assistance so that an ex-GI, man or woman, would be provided with a safe return to civilian life.

Mike Gensburger:

I don't know about other people, but my discharge was sent to me on home awaiting orders since I was given a medical discharge due to a knee injury from the service. I was home working at a civilian job by the time my final papers came. We had a small party with my folks and my family and I went to work the next day like normal. I do miss the camaraderie of the guys I worked with, but I don't miss the deployments and engineering inspections, but those were all part of the job and were things we all had to deal with.

Richard Cohagan:

A retirement ceremony. All the Chiefs line as if piping a Captain on board a ship, only the retiring chief or shipmate is piped off for retirement.

Charlie Ristorcelli, Capt USN (Ret.):

I left the Navy in 1997 after 35 years of service. Seven years enlisted, and 28 as an officer. I retired as a Navy Captain.

My retirement ceremony was held in Washington, DC where I was stationed at the time. In Navy tradition, we held the ceremony at the U.S. Navy Memorial which is located in the Washington Navy Yard. In attendance were a large number of my co-workers (military and civilian) as well as many friends and family members. A most memorable occasion.

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Scott Kelley, STG-3 1975-76, 3rd Div:

It was one day, steaming in circles aboard the USS New Orleans LPH-11 in the South China Sea (1977), part of the then-Ready Reserve Force forward based to deploy 1,800 crazed semi-human Marines in case of trouble (sure glad they were on our side!!!).

After the third Captain's Mast in a short time period, I was booted out with a General under Honorable Conditions discharge.

The Navy officer observing the affairs approached me later and apologized on behalf of the Navy, declaring I was "railroaded" and was unfairly punished, that I had actually committed no offense, that the accusation was unwarranted.

That made me feel better, but I was in a daze.

No ceremony, just a few hearty "good lucks" etc. from others.

A MAC flight eventually got me to Treasure Island Naval Base in the San Francisco Bay.

Got bumped off the flight in Japan so a sailor on emergency leave could have my seat.

Spent almost a week in transit at an Air Force base near Tokyo. Can't recall its name. The transit barracks was full so I was placed in bachelor officer quarters, four separate small bedrooms, clustered around a central living room. Pretty snazzy for a E-1 squid (E-4 at one time, easy come, easy go).

My sea-worn dungarees, long-in-comparison hair, beard and moustache set me apart from those Air Force guys.

I was regularly asked for my ID as I wandered the base. At the EM club I garnered a lot of attention. Those fly boys were shocked at my appearance, that was normal for the New Orleans at the time. My hair was past my ears and the beard almost touched my chest. Nothing unusual for those times, but compared to the Air Force.....

I shared some sea stories with those fly boys, true ones, not exaggerated. I reveled in the looks upon their faces and their reactions. A nice bunch of guys, but they sure experienced a different military life than a us bluewater sailors!

After those days of wandering around, mustering in the morning but wandering off on my own, shunning work details (what could they do, kick me out of the military???) an opening on a flight came up. Thirteen hours across the mighty Pacific Ocean to San Francisco International Airport, sitting

next to a disbursing officer off to buy a year's worth of peanut butter for the 7th Fleet. Learned more about peanut butter than you can shake a jar of jelly at.

Can't remember how I got to Treasure Island Naval Station from the airport.

My red-leaded dungarees, demeanor and the "void" covering my crew marked me as an "old salt fleet sailor" so I was left alone for the week it took for paper work to be finished.

Maybe because of a couple events that occurred on Sonar watch aboard the Scho, two officers harangued me for a half-hour about not mentioning certain things then made me sign a paper threatening me with 20 years and a quarter-million buck fine if I mentioned unmentionables. Maybe they had me confused with somebody else. They spoke in generalities and maybe that pre-discharge event was normal procedure, but those guys were stern. Couldn't get even one giggle or even a grin out of them. Maybe they were constipated that day or sumptin'.

I was booted off the island with orders to never return under threat of imprisonment.

For several months I walked in a daze, unconnected with my surroundings, not fitting in with my civilian peers.

Tried the local junior college, but I was still in a weird "daze." Unable to adequately describe that period. The only time in my life I felt that way. I wasn't drinking, either. Never was much of a drinker, and stopped totally many years ago.

After three or four months, I slowly began returning to "normal," as much as one can be normal in our wacky society.

I may have joined the "Canoe Club" too soon. Only 17 and was barely 18 when I made that 1975 WesPac aboard the Scho. A couple of years at a job or junior college before enlisting would likely have been much better for me and the Navy.

Well, live and learn.

I am still appreciative of 3rd Division of being tolerant of a young kid and teaching me so much. Other Schofield crew members also.

One last thing....I still miss standing Shore Patrol in Olongapo. Best job I ever had. I was a natural, kept the peace and never had to call upon the "hard hats." Never busted anybody. After awhile, the "hard hats" liked what they saw and would take me aside to patrol with them, handing my partner over to another pair of patrollers. Good times!!!

Jack Walling:

I left the Schofield in Yoko in 1968, got off 3 months early so that I could get into project transition, that is a program where you get ready for civilian life. I went to work for Radio Shack in Long Beach out in the Compton area. After 3 months when I was discharged I got my own store in Carson, CA where I worked until I opened my own store in Santa Barbara, but got tired of civilian life after running that business for a year and so I went back into the Navy where I stayed until I retired as Northern California Zone Sup for NRC San Francisco, attached to NRD Redding. I retired in Feb of 1989. I missed the old shipmates, but got remarried and am now living happily ever after.

Don Feldman:

I swapped from the Schofield to the Ramsey. As I was discharged off the Ramsey, my fellow BT2 Bob Barber, gonged me off the vessel, "Feldman Departing." That was a total surprise and very much appreciated. I stepped on the gang plank, saluted the flag, tossed my hat into the air, and stepped off into civilian life. Sailors on the dock understood what was going on and were wishing they were getting out by their remarks.

Sam Cotton, ETN-2:

I was scheduled to get out in Oct of 1969, but had put in for an early out to attend college. In mid August, Lt. Pan-coast (sp?), Operations officer, came and told me the early out was approved and that I could pack my sea bag and take off right away. At the time we were operating with our squadron and the carrier we were guarding (I don't remember which carrier) off the coast of Viet Nam. The carrier sent over a helicopter and sent a line with a harness down to the fantail, hooked me up and, with my sea bag over my shoulder, hoisted me up. We returned to the carrier where I caught a plane to Da Nang. I think they called the plane a propeller rather than jet, the COD flight or Cod something, might have been the mail plane. I stayed in Da Nang for a day or two and then caught a jet to Okinawa; stayed there a day or so and then on to Anchorage, where I wanted to get off and finally got to Long Beach. I suspect the process was pretty much the same for everyone else at that point, but getting there probably was not typical. So

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while there was no ceremony, the experience was one I could never forget and have recounted it many times to my family and friends, probably more than once to some. The one regret I had leaving early was missing out on the cruise to Australia, which I would have had to extend for. Still not sure if I made a mistake there, never did hear any good stories about the trip except for the equator crossing.

Ron Spagna:

I was discharged from the USS Schofield in Dec 1971. Served a month or 2 shy of 8 years, 4 of them as a plank owner, crewman on the Schofield. My place of discharge was Long Beach, CA. We had returned from our second WestPac and I was ready to get out. My family and I lived off base at the time. Most of my gear was already home. The only thing I had left to do was be processed out. That included medical, pay, etc. I remember having a pocket full of cash which I thought would last a lifetime. I don't recall any big celebration. I'm sure I had a few beers with some buddies, but we were quick to leave Long Beach and drive back east to start a new chapter in our lives.

An uneventful discharge, to say the least. However, as the years passed, I would occasionally give thought to my Schofield days and subsequent discharge. I have no regrets about how it

worked out. I did wish I had kept in touch with some of my buddies from those days. This finally came to pass a few years back. I started browsing the internet and found USS Schofield of course. Since then I have been to 3 reunions with my 4th coming up in San Diego. Seems like it all has come full circle now. I think I felt (in retrospect) that I had unfinished business when I left the Navy, especially the Schofield. I thank ML&RS for helping with this issue. My discharge is now complete and another new chapter is in the works. This of course is the extended Schofield family that my wife and I now have as a result of the reunion experiences.

Dale Hall, MS3 1977-79:

A few of my friends and I got together and went out the night before. We were in San Diego and hit a few of the bars there and National City. Then on the flight back to Indianapolis I got to thinking here, I just spent 4 years of my life in the Navy doing what ever they had me do. I was scared to death. Looking ahead, no job, no nothing. But I wouldn't have changed a thing. I made some good friends and I'd never have gotten to see the world the way we did. Being stationed in Scotland 2 years and making a WestPac.

John Winschel:

I left the Navy reluctantly, but I knew it was time to go and seek a new career after 20 years (actually 19 yrs 8 mo.) of service.

After being the Senior Instructor, Administration Officer and ultimately Officer in Charge of the San Pedro Navy Petroleum School, I was privileged to have the Commodore and his Secretary Master Chief Stengel (come from San Diego, CA, my parent command) to conduct my retirement. The Commodore made a very complimentary statement on my behalf as to my performance at all levels prior to turning over the command to LCDR F.R. Nutt. The Commodore included a supplemental letter along with my final evaluation that almost made me pause as to who he was writing about. "I loved it." Although a couple instructors were glad to see me go, there was a dinner celebration at the Chief's Club. I was already "home" so no travel was involved. After serving numerous commands, attending several schools, I feel I had a great fast twenty years with a lot of good memories (we like to forget some of them) and especially many good friends. God bless all my shipmates over the years. I hope they learned from me as I did from them.

Willie Berry, RM2 (SW) USN (Ret):

Just packed the old sea bag and left for the next command.

**TREASURER'S REPORT 2008
Continued**

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Cashier Check fees for "Deckplate" funding \$6.00 \$1.00/issue never collected

Dues collected 4/1/08
Thomas Fritsch \$20.00
Gary Guesto \$20.00
Nathan Sturre \$20.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$1,289.46**

Dues collected 6/1/08
Dorothy A. Gruber \$20.00
Peter Stevens \$20.00

Deckplate Funding \$391.80
Cashier check fees \$1.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$936.66**

Dues collected 7/1/08
Rafaelito Malubag \$20.00
Charles Dickens \$40.00
Donald Scarberry \$30.00
John Hevezi \$20.00
Ronald Spagna \$20.00
William Scott \$20.00
Anthony Morettini \$20.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$1,106.66**

Dues collected 7/25/08
John Dussor \$20.00
Gaylord Larson \$20.00
Carroll Housdan \$20.00
Patrick Pancoast \$25.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$1,191.00**

Dues collected 8/5/08

Abe Greenberg \$20.00
Elliot Clayton \$20.00
Thomas Gillespie \$20.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$1,251.66**

Dues collected at San Diego Reunion

John Winschel \$25.00
Ken Wilson \$20.00
David Dedon \$20.00
Barry (James) \$20.00
Mark Fletcher \$25.00
Ed Malchow \$60.00
Dan Gnade \$20.00
Al Personette \$20.00
John Walters \$20.00
Paul Taylor \$20.00
Charles Murtomaki \$40.00

**TOTAL FUNDS IN ASSOCIATION
\$1,541.66**