

THE MESSENGER

Volume 11 Issue 2

October 2003



Special Points of Interest

- See the status of the U.S. Navy in our cover article taken from the Navy web site.
- Can you help some one locate an old buddy? See page two under "Looking For..."
- WELCOME MAT begins on page two with eleven new names for the roster. See if you recognize anyone.
- MAIL CALL on page three has two letters from former shipmates and one request for information about a former sailor on the USS Amphion. Maybe you can help.
- Some information on getting a medal is on page four, as well as information on the Navy Log.

STATUS OF THE NAVY AS OF 10/6/03

Navy Personnel

Active Duty: 382,251

- Officers: 55,023
- Enlisted: 322,930

Midshipmen: 4,298

Ready Reserve: 152,464
(As of 31 Aug)

- Selected Reserves: 87,956
- Individually Ready Reserves: 64,509

Reserves currently mobilized: 3,957

Personnel on deployment: 42,066

Navy Department Civilian Employees: 188,492
(as of 3 Aug)

Ships & Submarines

Ships: 295

Ships Underway (away from homeport): 137
(46% of total)

On Deployment: 108
ships (36% of total)

Submarines underway: 27
(51% of submarine force)

On Deployment: 15
(28% of submarine force)

Ships Underway

Carriers:

- USS Enterprise (CVN 65)-Atlantic Ocean
- USS Nimitz (CVN 68) Indian Ocean
- USS Ronald Reagan (CVN-76) Atlantic Ocean

Command Ships:

- USS Coronado (AGF-11)

Pacific Ocean
USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19)
Sea of Japan

Expeditionary Strike Group I(ESG) 1:

- USS Peleliu (LHA 5) (MEU)- Arabian Gulf
- USS Ogden (LPD 5)- Arabian Gulf
- USS Germantown (LSD 42)- Arabian Gulf
- USS Port Royal (CG 73) - Arabian Gulf
- USS Jarrett (FFG 33) - Gulf of Aden
- USS Greenville (SSN 772)

**Amphibious Ships:
Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)**

- USS Iwo Jima (LHD7) (26 MEU)- Port visit, Rota, Spain

(Continued on page 2)

USS Nashville (LPD 13)- Atlantic Ocean
 USS Carter Hall (LSD 50)- Mediterranean Sea

USS Belleau Wood (LHA 3) - Pacific Ocean
 USS Boxer (LHD 4)- Pacific Ocean
 USS Cleveland (LPD 7) - Pacific Ocean
 USS Juneau (LPD 10) - Celebes Sea
 USS Trenton (LSD 14) port visit, Savannah, GA

Aircraft (operational): 4,000+

MCAAN GROUP COORDINATORS

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 Pensacola, FL 32526
 850-944-3302
 ltstagg@msn.com

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 38 Croyden Ln
 Hicksville, NY 11801
 516-681-0725
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 11231 Bullis Rd
 Marilla, NY 14102
 716-655-5415

Ray Bower (USS MARIAS)
 3471 Blackjack Ct
 Lake Wales, FL 33853
 863-676-4047

Jack Gibbs (USS NANTAHALA)
 42153 Tonquish Ct
 Canton, MI 48187-2492
 jegibbs@comcast.net

LOOKING FOR...

Robert Wayne Greene, Jr. from Dearborn, MI who served on USS Marias.
 Please contact LeRoy Bollig, 2756 Classen, Wichita, KS 67216. Phone: 316-263-7179. E-mail: LROJBOLLIG@att.net.

MCAAN MESSENGER CONTRIBUTIONS

Since the last newsletter, \$480.00 has been collected for the Messenger newsletter fund. That leaves a total of \$125.67 balance after subtracting the deficit of \$354.33. It was decided to use that balance to do as many issues of the newsletter on line only as possible. We will continue to publish newsletters on line as long as we have funds to do so. We will also be sure that those of you who send in contributions, but do not have an e-mail address, will receive a copy of the newsletter by mail for a year following your contribution, beginning with this issue. Many thanks to those of you who did contribute to this issue, some of you very generously, but any amount is helpful. Send contributions to ML&RS PO Drawer 11399, Hickory, NC 28603.

Karen Hoyle

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Balance from 07/03
\$MINUS \$354.33

Funds received since 07/03 issue
\$480.00

Funds available for 10/03 issue
\$125.67

Funds expended for 10/03 issue
\$47.09

Balance remaining for 01/04 issue
\$78.58

YOUR STORIES NEEDED

Since the newsletter has been going out only by e-mail for a while, we have seen a drop in contributions of stories. Please send in your stories from your time on a MCAAN ship. How many times have you had the chance to become a published author! Now's your chance. Please contribute!

Karen Hoyle



WELCOME MAT

The MCAAN Group proudly welcomes these recently located shipmates. Welcome aboard! We hope you will become an active member in the association by contributing both financially and with stories for the newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at a reunion.

USS AMPHION

Antero Vistro
 4253 Pancho Dr
 Camarillo, CA 93010
 805-484-8906

Art Wilson
 8607 Olivewood Ct
 Fair Oaks, CA 95628
 916-967-1442

(Also served on Nantahala & Cadmus)

Louis Forrasi (1965-87)
 2190 Airport Rd
 Siler City, NC 27344
 919-742-7478
 unionapw@chilitech.com

David Posthumus
 1700 Robbins Rd Lot 447
 Grand Haven, MI 49417
 616-844-7604

USS ARCADIA

Charles Fortun (1962-65) MR2
 33 Sycamore Dr
 Bath, PA 18014
 610-759-5759

USS CADMUS

Robert Nelson (1956-58) YN
 15110 Alexis St
 Tampa, FL 33624
 813-968-4882

John Hendricksen
 614 Tri Vista Right St
 Hot Springs, AR 71901
 501-609-0228
 chelec7@aol.com

*Fred Deits (1955-58) OM2
290 Preston Rd
Richards, TX 77873
936-295-6238*

USS MARIAS

*Nicholis Kester (1979)
270 S Greatneck Rd
Copiague, NY 11726
631-789-4857*

*Bob Albano (1971-73)
3663 15th Ter SE
Largo, FL 33771-4053
727-536-2806
blindbob45@cs.com*

USS NANTAHALA

*Will Wright (GMGC)
459 Conover Rd
Esperance, NY 12066
518-875-6739
jwlwright@cs.com*



TAPS

The Messenger learned of the following shipmates' deaths since the last newsletter. The deaths may not have been recent, but we just learned of them. Every member of the Association sends his heartfelt sympathy to the widows, families, and friends of the deceased.

*James McMullen
USS Marias 1955-58
Died June 24, 2002*

*Clair "Rip" Ripley
USS Marias (1947-53) MM1 A Div
Died August 4, 2003*

*Federico "Fred" Dizon
USS Cadmus
Died January 29, 1999*



MAIL CALL

Editor:

I've just received the newsletter pertaining to the sailors of the five ships listed.

Unfortunately, I cannot attend the reunion, age being against me for one thing, plus must I add, finances.

About the USS Cadmus AR 14, I put that ship in commission in Tampa, FL, on 4/23/46 and served until 11/18/54.

I've agonized trying to recall other shipmates of that era and time, but all escapes me except the fellow CPO Ryan in the Boiler shop, CPO Jarrett, my fellow chief in the Pipe shop. Cannot recall the CPO in the Carpenter shop that gave me permission to use the lathe and other machinery and equipment to make jewel boxes, tobacco jars, vases and such.

Sorry I cannot recall others, even the Division Officer escapes me.

But I do enjoy your publications, to end, bringing back memories as they do.

Sincerely,
Orson P. Warren
1086 York Way
Port Orange, FL 32129-4110

Dear Sir:

I'm writing in hopes to find some information on my dad and the ship, USS Amphion AR-13. My father, RM1 Frank M Charkosky, served from 1948-53.

I have pictures of him and all the guys. I wrote to you at one time in reference to the reunion, but no reply. My dad was one of the coolest dads and I want to find out all that I can and to find others that may have pictures of him. I don't have a way to scan the pictures that I have, so I can have someone say that's me.

My dad is now deceased of 20 years. To find some more fun pictures

of him in the Navy would be the greatest. I live here in Maryland.

Thank you,
Peggy Charkosky, SK2 USNR
Sk24me@aol.com

Dear Sir:

Have been meaning to write to you for so long.

Enjoy the paper we get even though we don't recognize any names, but hoping some day we will.

My husband, Bob, was on the USS Amphion AR-13—not real sure of the dates—early 50s, say 1949-51.

He retired from the insurance business after 32 years service. His is 74 and still very active, as we both are.

We came back from our tour of duty at Norfolk to Ohio. We have been married almost 55 years and have one son and one granddaughter. She is 22 and a dancer—teaches dance of all kinds.

I am enclosing a small donation and will try and send you a little the next time.

Sincerely,
Mrs. R. McClain
336 Meadowbrook Dr
Newark, OH 43055

P.S. He was a radioman.

FOR SALE
MARIAS PATCHES
1950s ERA
\$7.50

CONTACT:

JOHN A. NAVE
314 N. CLINTON
OLATHE, KS 66061

GETTING A MEDAL

Military service medals are issued by the appropriate branch. Inquiries should be sent to the branch of service as follows:

Navy, Marines and Coast Guard veterans contact:

Navy Liaison Office National Personnel Records, Room 3475
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Army veterans contact:

U.S. Reserve Personnel Center
Attn: ARPC-VFE
National Personnel Records
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Air Force veterans contact:

U. S. Air Force
National Personnel Records
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

The request should include the following:

- Veterans full name, printed or typed.
- Veteran's signature or that of the veteran's next of kin, if the veteran is deceased.
- Branch of service.
- Veteran's service number or Social Security number.
- Dates of service, or a close approximation.
- A photocopy of the veteran's discharge papers.

Anyone interested can also call the Veterans Administration at 1-800-827-1000, 8 am to 4:15 pm weekdays, and request Form 180, called the "Request Pertaining to Military Records." Complete the form and send it to the appropriate military branch.

NAVY LOG

We received the following letter, with a request to publish it for your information. You may be interested in signing up for the Navy Log.

Washington, D.C., July, 2003

The United States Navy Memorial Foundation in Washington, D.C. has established the "Navy Log" in an effort to honor all naval veterans that have served, or that are currently serving, our country. The Navy Log includes Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Mariners.

The Navy Log has thus far collected the names, service information and photographs of over a quarter of a million service personnel. All enrollments form a part of America's enduring naval heritage, a permanent and publicly accessible video register available for reviewing at the Naval Heritage Center next to the Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue, midway between the White House and the Capitol, or on the Memorial's Internet web site, <http://www.lonesailor.org/>.

Write:

U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation,
Attn: Navy Log
701 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 123
Washington, D.C. 20004-2608

Or call: 1-800-821-8892 Ext. 730

Media Contact:

David J. Michael, NCCM (SW), USN (Ret.)
Director, Navy Log

Signed:

David J. Michael, Jr.
NCCM(SW) USN Ret
Director, Navy Log
U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The Messenger is the official publication of the MCAAN Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in January, April, July, October, *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 Messenger*. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

ML&RS, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task 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 you stories and suggestions.

2004 MCAAN REUNION APRIL 29-MAY 2 SAN DIEGO, CA

Registration material will be sent out in January 2004.

OUR VIEW

Larry H Eckard, President, ML & RS, Inc

We truly appreciate the support and loyalty the members of the MCAAN Group have shown to Brenda and me and the staff of ML & RS, Inc. We intend to keep providing you with the first class service that you deserve and expect at reasonable prices and hopefully maintain your loyalty and support.

Ten years ago or less, we were in a so-called "buyer's market". Hotels competed for our business by offering excellent rates and amenities, but by the late 90's, this was changing. Hotels still competed for our business, but almost as if by collusion, the rates began to creep up. Even though we still were able to get bargain rates compared to "rack rates" or individual planners, the rates were (and remain) higher. With the downturn in the economy, everyone thought that we'd see the market swing back to where it had been in the early to mid 90's. Not so. Surprisingly the hotels did not buy into that theory. At the risk of losing business, rates were kept high, and that is where we are today. There are still some good rates out there (compared to today's average prices) but they are becoming harder to find, and certainly will not be found in major cities, especially in downtown hotels. Food prices have increased, but not to the extent that room rates have.

All you have to do is drive by the gas pump or look at your gas credit card and you'll see how fuel prices have increased. It's easy to see why tour costs have risen significantly.

With that brief background, this would be a good time to review exactly how using our services benefit your organization. Once you fully understand just what is included in your reunion price, you'll find it is actually a bargain. Just to refresh your memory:

- We started, and are continuing to this day, assisting you

in locating members of your ship, unit, organization, etc.

- We place reunion announcements (using the reunion coordinator's name as contact person) in over 400 newspapers throughout the country and forty veterans publications. Dozens of your members have been found this way.
- For those who want us to, we maintain your database. Even though a member of the group may duplicate our efforts (and there is no real reason for someone to do this), we have the most up-to-date roster of members.
- We subscribe to a postal service that tracks change of addresses provided the member leaves a forwarding address with the post office. That is not a free service; it costs \$.70 per change of address.
- We also subscribe to a label printing service, updated quarterly by the postal service, that automatically corrects address, adds the last four digits of the zip code, and prints the bar code which is required for discounted postage rates.
- The two subscriptions referred to above allows us to maintain a postal permit for "automation" which lowers the postage from \$.37 to \$.219.
- Once the city has been selected, we take it from there. Our experienced negotiators get the best possible prices, rates that you as an individual planner cannot get.
- We know how to negotiate, what to ask for, and just as important, what not to ask for.
- We get lower rates by not accepting or giving anything complimentary to anyone, so everyone pays the same

price.

- We get lower rates by reserving a block of rooms on your behalf instead of each individual calling the hotel freeing up the hotel's reservations staff to handle their face-to-face customers. This is especially significant at check out time. If you don't have any incidental charges, turn in your key and walk out – bill paid. You can't do that with an individual reservation.
- Hotels, tour companies, entertainers, and other vendors see us as repeat business, they see an individual planner as a one-time deal. Who gets the best deal consistently? We do!
- We prepare, print and mail all reservation material.
- We pay all the deposits (and unless you have a treasury this is significant)
- We receive all reservations from members
- We make all reservations with the hotel
- We are able to accept VISA and MASTERCARD
- We are on site to manage the reunion, freeing up your members to enjoy the reunion
- We act as liaison between the hotel and the group
- We create and print banquet and memorial service programs
- We provide each member with a memorabilia item commemorating the reunion
- We arrange for entertainment, guest speakers, Color Guards
- We have a host of first quality memorabilia items (caps, T-shirts, sweat shirts, etc)
- There is absolutely no cost to the coordinator or the association. (We are com-

(Continued from page 5)

pensated by charging a registration fee to everyone who attends the reunion)

- At the end of the reunion, we start over again.
- We truly care about your reunion. We want it to succeed just as much as you do.

Let's make it clear from the onset, there are some reunion groups that do successfully plan and manage their own reunions. Let me make it equally clear, doing your own reunion is not less expensive and it is a heck of a lot more trouble and work. We know, there is an organization or two out there that charges you to attend special seminars they call Fam-Tours (which by the way are sponsored and funded by the host city's Convention & Visitor's Bureau, so they actually are free). Hmmmmm! If you Reunion Chairmen are really interested in visiting a city, tell us and the next time they have a FamTour, we'll make arrangements for you to attend—free. (You'll still have to provide your own transportation.) Many Chairmen of our groups have gone free—and many more have been invited—to Fam's in Norfolk, Buffalo, Colorado Springs, Albuquerque, Asheville, Jacksonville, Virginia Beach, just to name a few, so you know first hand it can be done.

These seminars claim to "teach you how" to plan your own reunion by giving you a few common sense pointers and then trying to sell you liability insurance. You may learn something at one of these seminars that you don't know, but I challenge you to discover something that we are not already doing. My point is, if you pay to go to one of their planner events, (and I am sure some of you have); don't be fooled by how easy they make it sound. Planning and managing a reunion from start to finish is not nearly as easy as

the classroom instruction would have you believe. Remember the old adage, "Them that can do – Them that can't teach." We don't mean this to be critical because some of things they are now "teaching" are things we've been doing for years; but other things being taught are downright foolish.

Make no mistake, experienced hotel Sales Directors can spot an inexperienced individual planner a mile away. Unless you know how to negotiate, you won't get the best available deals, you'll get what the hotel wants to have. So, if the subject "doing it our selves" ever comes up, ask your self one question. Am I (me, personally, not one of the other guys) willing to accept total responsibility for all of the items we have listed above, plus the unforeseen things that will happen. If you are not willing to do it, why would you pass it off to a buddy?

With the increased use of the Internet, a lot of "fare saver" businesses, such as Expedia, Priceline, Travelocity, Orbitz, to name a few have emerged. Often you can get what seems to be a good room rate (sometimes even at the reunion hotel) from one of these services. Getting a room through one of these services may save you a couple of dollars (but we can document a couple instances when the reunion rate is less than the fare saver rate. But in the long run, it hurts the rest of your friends. The hospitality room, and banquet rooms are provided without cost, based on the number of guest rooms that are occupied by members of the group and reserved through ML & RS, Inc. Why do you think the first question you are asked is, "How many rooms will you require"? Then the next step is for the sales director to ask the past couple of reunion hotels to confirm your room history. Therefore, each person who gets his/her own room, either through one of these services, or even at another hotel, does not pay their fair share of hospitality and banquet room charges, passing this cost instead to those who stay in the hotel.

This is a serious matter, and unless we nip it in the bud, I can foresee the time when it will be necessary to charge folks not staying in the hotel

a sur charge to cover their share of the rooms in question. Folks, there ain't nothing free.

LETTER ORDER

Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in whta oredr the ltteers in a word are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is thta the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can still raed it wouthit porbelm. This is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the word as a wlohe.

amzanig hug?

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- A snail can sleep for three years.
- Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
- All 50 states are listed across the top of the Lincoln Memorial on the back of the \$5 bill.
- Babies are born without kneecaps.
- In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.
- It's impossible to sneeze with you eyes open.

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