



U.S.S. GUARDIAN	AGR-1	U.S.S. INVESTIGATOR	AGR-9
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U.S.S. SKYWATCHER	AGR-3	U.S.S. PROTECTOR	AGR-11
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U.S.S.	YR-23	U.S.S.	YR-65

YAGR'S C/O HARRY MILLER, 230 WEST FOREST AVE., PAWTUCKET, RI 02860-3318 (401) 724-7278 E-MAIL YAGR@MSN.COM

## YAGRGRAM #10

### 4TH YAGRS REUNION JUNE 3,4,5 1999

### NORFOLK, VA

October 29, 1998

The 4th YAGRS reunion will be held this coming June 3,4,5 1999, at the Norfolk Airport Hilton. The address of the hotel is 1500 Military Highway, Norfolk, VA 23502 and the phone number is 800-422-7474. Use this phone number to make your reservations. Place your reservations as soon as possible. When you make your reservation, tell them that you are with the YAGR Military Reunion group. The negotiated room rate is \$72.00 per night.

The hotel has a large parking lot (there is no fee for parking) and they will allow campers to park there but will not allow the campers to be in use.

The Hilton has set aside 150 rooms for us. This relates to about 250 to 300 people who will be attending this year's reunion. YAGRS has a large number of former crewmen who live in the Norfolk area, so I am unsure of how many rooms will be needed. To give those of you who live in the area some food for thought, after the Charleston reunion I was told by those who live in the Charleston area that they wish they had stayed at the hotel because they could have spent more time with the people who were attending. If you have never been to a reunion you should know that a lot of time is spent just sitting around shooting the bull and most of this takes place in the hospitality room.

I want to thank John Whitty (AGR-11 1962-64) and Jim Caruso (AGR-1 1955-57) for their help in checking out the hotels in the Norfolk area. I am now looking for someone who lives in the Norfolk area who would like to give me a hand picking up the refreshments for the hospitality room. Let me know if you are willing to help out.

While we have not set up the Friday tour, we are working on it. One thing that has disrupted possible plans is the fact that the Naval base is not allowing visitors to go aboard ship due to the recent attacks on our embassies. I have been told by a couple of tour companies that the Navy has no idea how long this policy will be in effect. So, I had to make a decision not to plan to go aboard any ships. The decision had to be made now for the simple reason that setting up these tours must be done well in advance. The Norfolk area has plenty of sights that we can visit and I'm sure that we will come up with a tour that all will enjoy.

As with the other three reunions Thursday will be for checking in and getting squared away. Friday we will have the tour. On Saturday morning, we will have our meeting of former crewmen while our wives and guests have their breakfast. The banquet will be on Saturday night. I'm hoping to keep the reunion registration fee at or near last year's cost of \$65.00 per person. Every effort will be made to do so. Hopefully by the next YAGRGRAM everything will be set up as far as places and times are concerned. While I'm on the subject of activities at the reunion, I would like to hear from you on whether we should have music at the banquet. Again, after the last reunion I heard from people who said that the music makes it hard to talk and be heard. If you think we should have music, let me know.

Again the wives/guests are asked to bring a small item to be raffled off at the breakfast. The cost should not exceed \$5.00. Handcrafted items are most welcome. Also remember that there will be a unique hat contest for the wives/guests at the breakfast. This can reflect your personality, home state or anything you can think of.

As a final note for now in regards to the reunion I would like to ask that you send a reunion notice to your local newspaper and to any military type magazines such as VFW, American Legion, Retired Officers, Proceedings, etc. Please give ship name, dates and location of the reunion. If you wish, use my name as the contact person.

YAGRS has reached a milestone and is well on its way to another. One of the ships, the USS Protector (AGR-11) now has over 100 former crewmen that have been located. Dave Johnson (AGR-11, 1962-64) played a large part in achieving this number. Dave has spent quite a bit of time locating former crewmen from the Protector. The next milestone that is within reach will be finding 1,000 former YAGR/AGR crewmen. YAGRS has located 951 former crewmen to date so 1,000 is not too far off. When I started YAGRS I never realized it would grow so large. I figured that if I found 200 or 300, I would be doing well. This success was made possible because a lot of people got information to me and I want to thank everyone who has done so.

Since the last YAGRGRAM, 87 former crewmen have been found. This brings our number to 951. Again I ask if you know of, or have any information of, former crewmen, let me know. As I said in YAGRGRAM 9, if you gave me a name and address of someone and you did not see it on the crew list for the ship, it means that person never got back to me after I sent a notice to them. Maybe if you get in touch with them, they will respond.

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE A LISTING OF CREWMEN FROM YOUR SHIP WITH THE LAST YAGRGRAM, IT MEANS YOU HAVE NEVER RETURNED THE QUESTIONNAIRE THAT WAS SENT TO YOU. If you did not receive this list and want one, get in touch with me.

**If you are moving remember to send me your new address.** Also if any information has changed such phone numbers, zips, etc let me know about this also.

**E-MAIL:** I lost all the e-mail addresses I had. I will not go into details but my server cannot tell me why. So if you have an e-mail address, please send me a message with your name and the ship you served on. Make sure you include your name. Thanks.

Work is going along on the model of the Radar Picket Ship that Bill Simcox (AGR-4 1959-61) is building for the YAGR display that will be on the USS Yorktown. Bill says that he has started the carving. To give you an idea of the caliber of work Bill is doing, he has even had the wood that is being used for the model X-rayed to make sure that there aren't any flaws in the wood.

To date we have raised \$1,510.75 of the \$2,500.00 needed for our project of building the model and setting up the display on the Yorktown. If you have not made a donation yet, please do so. Anything that you donate will help YAGRS reach its goal.

In regards to the Yorktown, Rod Neal (AGR-11 1964-65) has been working on finding the ideal compartment for our use. There was a little setback due to personnel changes aboard the ship. To avoid something like this happening again, he has gone right to the top (meaning the Admiral) aboard the ship. After his meeting with the Admiral, Rod has said that we are on track again.

YAGRS WEB PAGE: 1,802 hits to the web site since November 18, 1997. Not much has been done on the web page recently. I hope to correct this in the near future. I want to have the history of each ship included with information I now have. I also want to get some of the pictures that have been sent to me on line. One thing that I

have been hearing from crewmen from the DER's and DDR's is that they would like to see some information on their hull types also. I think this is a good idea, but if I do this it will be on an as-time-allows basis. The web page can be found at <http://tripod.com/~YAGRS/index.html> NOTE: letters YAGRS are case sensitive

In the past few months I have received some more information about the ships for use in the book that we are in the process of putting together. We still are lacking a lot of information. I would like to get some more info on the earlier radars the ships used. As radar detection was the primary function of the ships, we should have quite a bit of information on the radar in the book. If you have anything about the ships, pass it along. It just might be something we can use.

Once again I want to remind you that dues are now due for June 1, 1998 to May 31, 1999. Dues are \$17.00 per year the first time you pay and \$15.00 per year after that. Your dues are most important for the existence of YAGRS. For instance, this YAGRGRAM costs over \$500.00 to send out. Please make an effort to get your dues paid up. If you have paid your dues and have not yet received your membership card, let me know.

I received this letter from Phil Wache (AGR-12 1959-62), and I thought that I would pass it along.  
Dear Harry,

Just a note that may be of some interest. You advised us in a newsletter to check to see if we had any medals coming to us that were never issued before we were discharged. I received 3 and this allowed me to join the VFW, as the Vigil was in Cuba in 1961-62. Also these service dates have allowed me to join the American Legion.

I would never have known that I was eligible for the VFW had I not inquired about these medals. There are many benefits in belonging to these 2 veterans groups and I urge anyone who is not a member to check them out.

Best Wishes,  
Phil Wache  
USS Vigil AGR-12

To check to see whether you are entitled to any medals, you can write to the following address:

National Personnel Records Center  
9700 Page Blvd Room 5409  
St Louis, MO 63132-5100  
ATTN; Navy

In making your request, include your complete name, rank/rate, social security number, dates of service and date of birth. Your request will be processed in three to four months (this is what they say).



Do you recognize this emblem? I received a cruise book from Dave Spriggs (AGR-14 1962-64) and in this book there was a small picture of this emblem with a large E centered on it. This emblem was for the E Award the ship had won. It leads me to believe this was the emblem for RADRON ONE. Any input on this emblem will be helpful, such as was this the RADRON emblem, what were the colors and most important does any one have the emblem or a good picture of it?

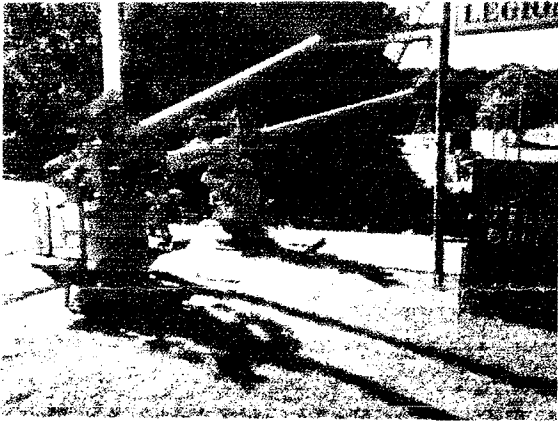
This drawing was scanned into my computer and I did a quick touch up on it. In regards to the ship emblems we now have the following

RADRON TWO  
YAGR-DIV 21  
YAGR 2,3,5,6,7,8,9 and 10  
AGR 1 through 16

The emblems for YAGR-3/AGR-3 are the same except for the letters YAGR or AGR  
YAGR-8/AGR-8 are the same except for the letters YAGR or AGR

If you have an emblem that isn't listed here, please get in touch with me.

This story goes back to March of 1965. After my transfer off the USS Protector (AGR-11) in 1964, I was assigned to the USS YR-65. For those of you who don't know, the YR was the repair ship for RADRON TWO. In March of 1965 I along with a couple of other shipfitters was given a job to help the Seabees move and mount two 3" guns at an American Legion Post in East Greenwich (or "East G" as everyone called it). These particular guns were removed from the USS Vigil AGR-12 when she was being decommissioned.



On the day that the guns were to be moved to East G the Seabees showed up with cranes, a tractor with a lowboy trailer, stake body trucks and quite a few men. On the other hand, we shipfitters had a pickup truck with a trailer mounted welding machine and, if memory serves me right, three men. After the guns were loaded on the trailer, we proceeded to the American Legion Post. Traveling along busy Route 1 with everybody stopping and staring at our makeshift convoy, we finally arrived at the Legion hall. While the Seabees busied themselves removing and placing the guns, we shipfitters busied ourselves at the Legion bar. Now being good sailors that we were, it didn't matter that it was early morning. Free drinks are free drinks. By the time we were needed, we were ready for anything, that's for sure. Now my job was to disable the guns by welding everything that moved. While doing this we had to take a few more breaks (after all welding is pretty thirsty business) before we finally finished. But to make sure, we decided to have a few more beers, Then we would check the job out once more just to make sure. We certainly didn't want these guns to ever fire another round. We finally left the Legion Hall (I know this for a fact as I am sitting at home now). To this day I still don't know how or when. One thing I do know, those guns never fired again.

What brought all this up is that I went down to the Legion Hall last week to take some pictures of the guns for Bill Simcox. While taking these pictures, I got to thinking about that day in March of 1965.

PS: I didn't go inside. The damn place wasn't open yet.

Sent in by Joe Biron (AGR-14 CO 1964-65)

So far I have not seen nor heard any stories or claims about the Charlie the Tuna competition the RADRON 1 AGRs were involved in. The U.S. Department of Commercial Fisheries asked us for assistance in locating schools of tuna so they could track them and help the commercial fisherman to find them. Most of the AGRs would swing out fishing booms with about eight or ten lines while at "trolling speed" on station. As I recall, three tuna within an hour called for a preliminary report. If the rate of catch increased to ten within fifteen or so minutes, a status report was sent. Boy, were those baked tuna delicious. I have not had any as good since. When the catch dropped off, the final report was sent out that included the number and general size of the catch.

I am adding this as it may be of interest to some. The USS Saratoga is sitting in mothballs in Newport RI. A foundation has been set up to keep her here in RI and use her as the focal point of an Air/Land/Sea Historic Park at Quonset Point, RI. You can receive more information from:

USS Saratoga Museum Foundation, Inc

PO Box 28581

Providence, RI 02908

Call 401-831-8698, fax # is 401-831-8707

e-mail SaveSara@aol.com

Here are some stories from Joal Stroud (AGR-4 1957-59)

I remember the drive for the 17 antenna went from somewhere in the #1 hold up to the antenna. It was constantly leaking oil and they could never stop it. We had a Chief ET aboard named Black. For some reason or another he tried some women's Kotex on the leak and it absorbed almost all it. Thereafter, when we went on station, the ship had the supply center send us several boxes of Kotex. Don't know what the people at the supply center thought about that since we didn't have any women aboard

All of our inbound tracking reports on planes were sent to the Air Force to be forwarded to the North American Defense Center. Since we were working with the Air Force, all our tracking information from CIC had to use AF time. We got a daily time hack from every AF station we were working with at the time. I remember one Sunday morning we asked for a time hack from the AF unit at St Charles. They came back and said the man in charge of the clock they used for time hacks had locked it up and took the key home. We would have to wait until Monday.  
(So much for specialization)

## **Ships Store**

(items for sale)

I will again be ordering hats. If you want one, the cost is \$14.50, which includes postage. Send me your name, ship wanted and how many hats along with your check made out to YAGRS. **Please get your order to me by November 30, 1998.**

**Ship Logo (emblem):** All are approx. 4 1/2" diameter, printed on 8 1/2 x 11" glossy paper.

AGR-1 through AGR-16

YAGR 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

RADRON TWO, YAGR DIV 21----- \$3.50 ea.

**Silhouette drawing of Ship:** Approx. 9 1/2" long, printed on 8 1/2 x 11" glossy paper-----\$3.50 ea.

NOTE: All Logos and drawings are in color and suitable for framing.

**Pin for hat/lapel:** 3/4" diameter with logo of YAGRS in color-----\$4.25 ea.

**ALL PRICES INCLUDE POSTAGE.**  
**MAKE CHECKS OUT TO YAGRS.**

**If you have ordered a hat, logo or pin and have not received it, let me know.**

