



USS GUARDIAN	AGR-1	USS INVESTIGATOR	AGR-9
USS LOOKOUT	AGR-2	USS OUTPOST	AGR-10
USS SKYWATCHER	AGR-3	USS PROTECTOR	AGR-11
USS SEARCHER	AGR-4	USS VIGIL	AGR-12
USS SCANNER	AGR-5	USS INTERDICTOR	AGR-13
USS LOCATOR	AGR-6	USS INTERPRETER	AGR-14
USS PICKET	AGR-7	USS TRACER	AGR-15*
USS INTERCEPTOR	AGR-8	USS WATCHMAN	AGR-16
USS	YR-23	USS	YR-65
		*USS INTERRUPTER	AGR-15

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<http://members.tripod.com/~YAGRS/index.html>

YAGRGRAM #13

July 20, 1999

Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN

Minneapolis / St. Paul MN area has been chosen for the 5th YAGR'S reunion. At this time we do not have dates or the actual location. But, as in the past, you can assume it will be around the end of May or the beginning of June.

Norfolk Reunion

At the 4th YAGR'S reunion we had 127 former crewmen and 96 spouses/guests signed up to attend. We had crewmen from all 16 ships and 1 YR.

The reunion went pretty much as planned and, thankfully, we had no major problems. And we couldn't have asked for better weather.

We kept to the same basic schedule as the other 3 reunions. Thursday we checked in and got reacquainted with everyone in our hospitality room. Friday we toured the MacArthur Museum and then took a bus tour of the Norfolk Naval base with lunch at the Breezy Point Officers club. Saturday morning we held our crew meeting while our spouses/guests had their breakfast and crazy hat contest. Saturday night the farewell banquet was held at the hotel. Sunday morning was for saying our good-byes until next year. As always there was plenty of free time to do what we wanted.

At this year's crew meeting LCDR. James Monks (AGR-1 58-59) was presented with a plaque for being the first one to sign up for the reunion.

After going over the various reports, we went on to discuss the location for reunion 2000. Dave Johnson (AGR-11, 1962-64) and John Morrison (AGR-11, 1958-60) will be doing the leg work in the Minneapolis / St Paul area.

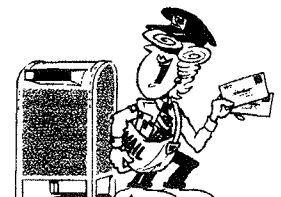
As promised YAGR'S has moved to the center of the country. We hope that this location will attract more men from the Western part of the country. If this location does that, then I'm sure we will be moving further west for our 6th reunion. We are using this area to see how many people from the west coast attend. We also hope that we will not lose the men who have attended our reunions who live on the east coast.

So to put it in a nut shell, to those of you who have said that they want the reunions to move further west so they will be able to attend, now is your chance to back up your remarks.

There were 3 cities that were finally voted on--St. Louis MO, (21 votes) Knoxville, TN (13 votes) and Minneapolis (76 votes). Some crewmen did not vote.

More information on the next reunion will follow in the next YAGRGRAM.

If you have moved or are planning to move, please send me your new address and phone number!!!!



Bill Simcox, Model Maker

The model Bill Simcox (AGR-4, 1960-61) built was on display at the reunion. And by all accounts, Bill, you did a great job. Bill reported he put in around 400 hours to build the model.



Bill Simcox (on left) Harry Miller (on right)

Well, we surpassed that amount. We raised \$2,642.20. A thank you goes to all of you who made a donation.

Bill was going to charge \$750.00 for the model. This meant that YAGR'S would have \$1,874.20 to go towards setting up a display. A vote was taken at the Saturday morning crew meeting to accept the model and to pay the \$750.00. The vote was unanimous.

After the crew meeting, Bill approached me and said that he decided to donate the \$750.00 he was to receive for the model to YAGR'S. After discussing his offer with him, I accepted his most generous donation on behalf of YAGR'S. Since the reunion another \$150.00 has been donated. The total now stands at \$2,792.20.

YAGR'S Book

Richard Dobson (AGR-2, 1959) and Richard Price (AGR-1, 1959-62) have agreed to search the Naval archives to locate more information for the book we are putting together. It is hoped that they will be able to locate more data that will be of interest to us.

If you think you can help, please call Richard Price at (410) 398-6561.

Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Joe Biron (AGR-9, 1958-60, CO AGR-14, 1964-65) along with Al Nannini (AGR-15, 1960-62) will research the procedures necessary to enable former YAGR, AGR crewmen to be awarded this ribbon.

While this award is currently given to shipboard crewmen retroactive only to 15 August, 1974, it is hoped that the Navy will recognize the amount of time that radar picket ships spent at sea and change the dates to authorize the YAGR, AGR crews to receive this ribbon. If you or anyone you know is able to help us, contact Joe at (860) 582-6628.

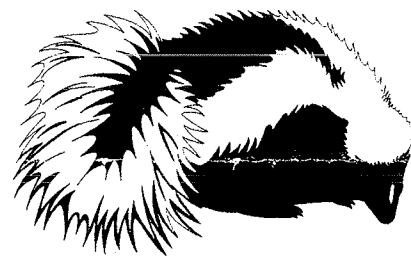
USS Locator AGR-6

Skunk update

Sent in by Clyde Miller (AGR-6, 1962-64)

The skunk arrived as the Locator's mascot about Nov. 1963. After its first trip at sea, and a bad case of seasickness, he gained his sealegs. He had the run of the ship. You might see him scurrying down to the mess-deck for a handout or dodging in and out of compartments. On his second trip to sea, he started to get a bit snappy at the crew. The Skipper ordered him to knock it off and the crew to quit handling him so much. After the third trip at sea, the Skipper ordered him to the vet. It was a trying time in his life. He was to be fixed. He was told it would make him friendlier and not bite as much. We he didn't believe the vet and he kept up his biting anyway.

The skunk made two more trips to sea and died of an unknown cause. He was heart broken, I assume. After all, he didn't have a companion.



Evan Thomas (AGR-6, 1964-65)

Regarding the Locator's skunk, all I recall is the critter's name: "Pukie" (maybe that's because it smelled so bad). It was the XO's pet and woe unto he who failed to observe proper decorum when talking about it. When the weather was bad, Pukie had to stay in the XO's stateroom. So, with the resultant odor that went with it, having to make reports there was something to be avoided. Whatever became of Pukie is anybody's guess. The animal was lucky someone didn't use it as "Oscar" in a man overboard drill!

If you have any stories that you think will be of interest, send them to me and I will try to fit them in as space is available.

USS YR-65

Bill Simcox will take on the task of building a model of the USS YR-65 as his next project.

If anyone has pictures that will aid Bill on this project, please send them to me and I will get them to Bill. If you send something in, I will make sure you get the item back. We especially need information on what the hull looked like below the water line.

For those of you who don't know, a YR is a mobile repair barge, and the YR-23 and YR-65 were attached to RADRON TWO as repair facilities for the squadron. The YR would take on repair jobs that were too large for the ship's company to handle and not big enough for a yard job. Unlike other YR's, the YR-65 had a third deck added to accommodate the staff of RADRON TWO and the equipment it needed. The YR-23 was the first to be with the squadron. It is my understanding that the smaller YR-23 was replaced by the larger YR-65.

Display Of Model Ship Battleship Massachusetts

In the past couple of YAGRGRAMS you have been told the model will be displayed on board the USS Yorktown. But as with any best laid plans, a problem has come up. Rod Neal had hoped to get a compartment aboard the Yorktown but he was informed that the Yorktown could only allow a display case for our use.

When I heard of the Yorktown's decision, I got in touch with the USS Massachusetts, located at Fall River, MA, and had a meeting with the ship's Captain. I explained to him what YAGR'S wish to do. At the crew meeting in Norfolk I was authorized to proceed with talks with the Massachusetts.

On my return from the reunion I had a meeting with the ship's curator and we reached an agreement that the ship will provide YAGR'S with a space.

The ship is in the process of rearranging its existing displays, so we do not yet know when the space will be available. However, in my talks with the curator he

indicated that he wants to have the rearranging done just as much as we do and as soon as possible.

Naturally, the focal point of our display will be the model of the Guardian along with the planned YR-65 model. We also have 8 YAGR and 16 AGR emblems which will be mounted and framed for display. We will also have to come up with some type of signs for each ship showing its history but until we know the size of the compartment we cannot figure out their size.

To help keep our cost down, I would like to hear from anyone who might be able to help with this project. First, everything will have to be of museum quality work. If any one has a printing or graphics business, wood working business or any other type of business that might be able to accomplish building our display and would like to help, please get in touch with me. Also we are considering having some of our members do some of the work aboard the ship. Again, if you think you might be able to help, get in touch with me. As things progress and plans get finalized, I will be able to be more specific on what our needs will be.

At this time I want to ask everyone to see what they might have that can be donated for this display. Do not send anything yet, just let me know what you have. I am especially looking for pictures of the ships in rough seas and / or covered with ice.

Found Crewmen

1,085 former crewmen now have been in touch with YAGR'S. As you all know, we are actively searching out former crewmen. This is a very time-consuming and expensive thing to do.

I want to thank everyone who has given me leads. I have tried to locate every person whose name was given to me. Some I managed to find, and some I had no luck with at all.

I hope to locate as many former crewmen as possible in the coming years. If you know of any former crewmen that have not been located, or know where they might be found, get this information to me and I will see what can be done to add them to our found crewmen list. Or, for that matter try to reach them yourself. Anything you can do helps.

Lee Doyel (AGR-15, 1960-62) has copies of the crew list for the following years and ships.

1959 AGR-3 Thru AGR-16,

1960 AGR-15 and AGR-16,

1965 AGR-1,2,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,13,14,15,16.

For more information you can reach Lee at

850-433-6930

Dues

Dues are \$17.00 the first year you pay; then they are \$15.00 every year thereafter.

Dues for this year are now due. The YAGR'S year for dues runs from June 1, 1999 to May 31, 2000. If you have paid your dues and you did not receive your membership card and an updated crew list for the ship/ships you served on with this YAGRGRAM, please get in touch with me.

I have added information to the mailing label as indicated below. If there is no date on the first line it means that your dues have not been received for this year.

5/31/00 (DUES PAID THRU)

JOHN SMITH GR-11 (hull # means I received questionnaire)

0000 STREET

ANYTOWN, RI 00000

Spouses/guests Donation

Thanks to the spouses/guests for donating the \$369.00 they collected at their breakfast to the YAGR'S treasury.

Ship Emblems (Logo's)

We are still trying to locate the ships emblem for, YAGR-1, YAGR-4, YAGR-11, YAGR-12, YAGR-13, YAGR-14, YAGR-15 (both Tracer and Interrupter). If you have anything (such as letterhead, pictures, cigarette lighters, etc.) that shows what the above emblems look like, we can use it. If you send an item to me, I will make sure it gets back to you.

The Story Behind "TAPS"

It all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when a Union Army Captain, Robert Ellicombe, was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk

his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the Captain reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern. Suddenly, he caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light he saw the face of the soldier. It was his son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his enemy status. His request was partially granted. The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for the soldier at the funeral. That request was turned down since he was a Confederate.

Out of respect for the father, they did say they would give him one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his dead son's uniform. The wish was granted.

This music was the haunting melody we now know as "TAPS" that is now used at all military funerals.

These are the words to "TAPS"

Day is done, Gone the sun, From the lakes, From the hills, From the sky. All is well. Safely rest. God is nigh.

To close out this YAGRGRAM I want to thank everyone for the gifts that were presented to Gail and me at the reunion. They are greatly appreciated.

Also thanks to all of you who filled out the questionnaire that was passed out at the reunion. I did read all of them.

For your information

YAGR stands for Ocean Station Radar Ship (Service Craft)

AGR stands for Radar Picket Ship (Auxiliary Ship)

Source: Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships

Pictures of Ships

To those who asked where they can get pictures of a ship

contact: U.S. Naval Institute

118 Maryland Ave

Annapolis, MD 21402-5035

(410) 268-6110