



Radar Picket Ships

YAGRGRAM #15

January 10, 2000

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5th YAGR'S Reunion

YAGR'S will be holding its 5th reunion this coming June 1,2,3, 2000 in Minneapolis, MN. Our host hotel will be the Minneapolis / St Paul Airport Hilton, 3800 East 80th St, Minneapolis, MN 55425, (800)637-7453.

You can call the above phone number to reserve your room. Let them know that you are with the YAGR'S reunion group to receive our special room rate of \$89.00 per night. Please make your reservations as soon as possible. This will help us (YAGR'S) with planning.

The Hilton offers free shuttle service from the airport and to the Mall of America, which is only two minutes from the hotel.

The cost of this year's reunion will be **\$69.00 per person**. This covers the hospitality room, the Friday tour with lunch, the breakfast for the spouses/guests that is held on Saturday morning and the Saturday night banquet. Please return your reunion registration to me as soon as possible but no later than May 10, 2000

The tour that will be held on Friday, June 2, will include a boat cruise with lunch served on board and then a trip to Stillwater, MN, the oldest town in Minnesota. There will be time to explore Stillwater's historic houses and its streets which are lined with many galleries and boutiques.

The reunion format will remain the same as the past four reunions. Thursday will be for checking into the hotel and meeting others in our hospitality room; Friday our group tour will be held; Saturday morning we hold our membership meeting. While the meeting is going on, a breakfast is offered to the spouses/guests and Saturday night we hold our farewell banquet.

We try to keep the hospitality room open as much as possible. The room is stocked with soft drinks, light snacks (chips, pretzels etc.) drinks, beer and wine. But most of all this is where we gather to meet old friends and make new ones.

You will have plenty of free time while at the reunion. If you wish to send for tourist information, you can contact the Minnesota Office of Tourism, 121 East 7th Place, St Paul, MN 55101, (800)657-3700.

Spouses / Guests Breakfast.

Once again we will have a breakfast for the spouses/guests on Saturday morning June 3. As in the past, we are asking everyone to bring an item for the penny social raffle. Whatever you bring should cost in the \$5.00 range. Handcrafted items are always welcome. Please do not wrap the items that you bring.

To see how creative we can be, we are having a "Crazy T-shirt Contest" this year. There isn't any special theme. Just be crazy and have fun making the creation that you bring.

While a prize will be given, the whole idea is just to have fun. Also you can brag to everyone that you won the contest.

Pre reunion tour

You will find enclosed information for a pre reunion tour that will be held on Wednesday May 31, 1999.

All payments are to be made directly to the tour company as this tour is not part of your reunion registration or YAGR'S official reunion.

YAGR'S Exhibit

The Battleship Massachusetts has offered YAGR'S a compartment that it has available. It is 55' wide by 20' long. At this time scale drawings are being made up to help us determine the best way to lay out the compartment. We hope to have these drawings completed soon and at that time we will be setting up a schedule to get started on the work for the display.

We have a list of people who have said they would be willing to do some of the work onboard the ship. If you wish to offer your help, please get in touch with me. We are hoping that we can do most of the work needed to set up our display ourselves. Doing so will greatly help us reduce the cost of the display. The type of work that has to be done first will be cleaning and painting the compartment and prep work for setting up the display. Most of this work will take place on a weekend. Arrangements will be made for us to stay onboard the Massachusetts and to be bunked in staterooms.

As most of you know, we have the model of the USS Guardian that was built and donated by Bill Simcox (AGR-4 1960-61). This model will be the focal point of the display.

After going out and getting bids for the 20 signs that are needed, the work has started. 16 of the signs will be 18" X 24" and 4 will be 24" X 24". All of them will be laminated to protect them from people touching them and from harmful light. The 18" x 24" signs will show the ship's emblem with a brief history of the ship. The other four will be used for RADRON ONE, RADRON TWO and an overview of how and why the radar picket ships were used. At this time we are working with the graphic design company on the final edit.

These signs are of museum quality and to get this quality you have to pay for it. The twenty signs will cost YAGR'S \$3,300.00. Once you see these signs you will agree they are well worth the cost. We considered using picture frames as a means of display, but with the cost of the special paper and matting plus the heavy duty frames with safety glass we found it was only a few dollars more to have them done professionally. We opted to go professional.

As a means of keeping the signage cost down, I managed to get professional graphic and word processing programs donated to us. This way we can do most of the computer work ourselves and not pay someone else to do it. The graphic's company that will be doing our signs is being most helpful in passing along information on how best to set up everything.

Our donations to date total \$3,048.20. This will greatly help in the initial cost for the signs. Now we need to raise funds for the rest of the onboard display. To help in raising these funds, we will hold a 50/50 raffle. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Minneapolis reunion on June 3, 2000. The winner will receive half the proceeds from the sale of these tickets and the other half will go towards the display.

You will find one book of six tickets enclosed. The tickets are \$1.00 each or a book of six for \$5.00. If you would like additional tickets let me know. Please return your ticket stubs to me as soon as possible but no later than May 10, 2000. I would appreciate your returning any unused tickets so I can pass them along to others who will want more.

Something to consider when deciding whether to purchase tickets is to keep in mind that the items YAGR'S sell (hats, logos, pins and drawings) are sold with a very small mark up and we have kept the dues at \$15.00. I hope you give some serious thought to take at least one book of tickets.

USS Tracer AGR-15

Thanks to Al Mendoza of UNISEA, additional information on the Tracer has been received including the following photo's. They show Tracer (UNISEA) sitting in the waters of St. Paul harbor. One thing that is interesting is a survey that was done for her owners. The following is a portion of that report which is dated April 4, 1984 that was done while she was in Dutch Harbor, AK.

"The vessel was originally built in 1945 as the four hatch Liberty ship SS William J. Riddle and operated as a dry cargo ship until mothballed in 1947. In 1958 the US Navy converted the vessel into the electronic surveillance vessel USS Interrupter. The name was changed to USS Tracer in 1959 and operated until taken out of service in 1965. The vessel reportedly was declared surplus and sold in 1974.

The vessel is of the straight deck type with a 3 deck house amidships and a raised poop aft. There are four cargo holds with tween decks and double bottom tanks throughout. Machinery spaces are amidships.

Currently all main propulsion machinery has been removed. The propeller has been removed. Propeller shafting terminates at the aft end of the engine room where there are located 2 caterpillar D398 generators and a single D399 diesel driven AC generator providing a total of 2000 KW of electrical power. All 3 generators exhaust into the fireboxes of the original 2 Wicks 250 psig boilers. The 2 boilers have now been converted and are fired by 3 automatic diesel oil burners. Steam is provided for processing line, hotel services, deck machinery and auxiliary machinery.

The vessel is moored to shore by a 2 1/16" NACO anchor which is secured to a deadman fore and aft along with stern and spring lines. The vessel is moored starboard side to the dock. A wooden gantry is arranged along the port side of the vessel where fishing vessels can tie up while discharging cargo to the processor.

The main deckhouse has been converted to three decks of crew accommodations as well as the No. 4 upper and lower hold spaces. All cargo hatches have been welded closed on the main deck. The forepeak, and Nos. 1 and 2 tween decks house crab and shrimp processing equipment while auxiliary processing equipment is located in a wooden house built atop the No. 2 hatch. Four 2.5 ton cargo booms are hinged on the forward kingpost and service the forward deck, port and starboard.

The No. 1 and 2 lower holds contain packing and refrigeration spaces serviced by an elevator. Refrigeration equipment is located aft of the No. 2 tween deck. Next aft is the machinery space with two steam boilers and settling tanks forward, generators aft and amidships and sewage storage and treatment tank to starboard. The No. 3 tween deck contains galley and mess room spaces while the lower hold is a storage room.

Fresh water is provided direct from the city main.

Reportedly all double bottom and deep tanks, unless as stated otherwise, are not used and are empty.

The poop house aft is now used as a ship's office while an attention locker just forward of the same is used for storage."

Remainder of this report will be continued in the next YAGRGRAM.

Wanted Items

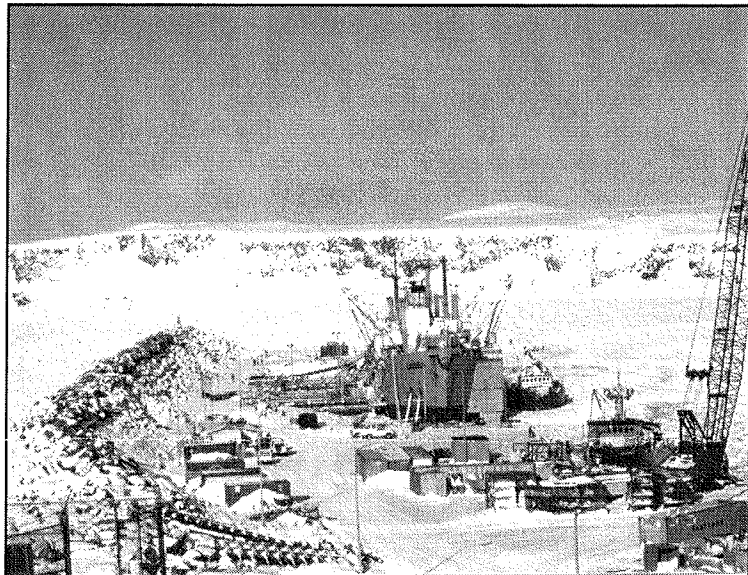
At this time we are looking for the following items for use in the YAGR'S exhibit.

Shoulder Patches (Ship Names)

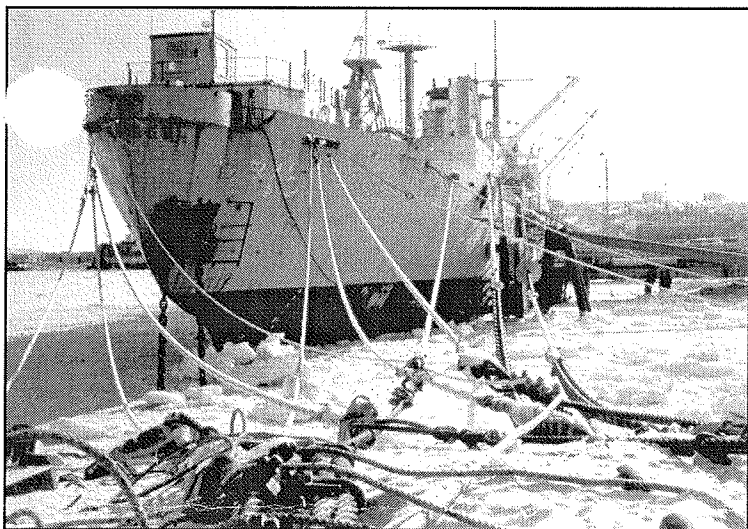
Cigarette Lighters

Pictures that show the ships in rough seas or covered with ice

As a point of interest, I received a phone call from a local radio station in Dutch Harbor, AK. They wanted additional information about the Tracer now called the Unisea by her present owners. They want to do a story on her because her present owners have ties to the Unalaska area. Who knows. This might lead to others who want to do a story on the Icebreaker Ships.



St Paul Harbor, AK



St Paul Harbor, AK 1998

Sea Service Award

Joe Biron (AGR-9, 1958-60, CO AGR-14 1964-65), Al Nannini (AGR-15, 1964-65) and Harry Miller (AGR-11 1962-64, YR-65 1964-65) received word that the Navy would not be awarding the Sea Service award to the radar picket ships. Basically they did not want to extend this award to the dates that the ships were in commission. If you have any thoughts or comments on this matter, let me know.

I want to thank Joe and Al for all the time and effort they put into this project. It is unfortunate that it did not work out for us.

YAGR'S

We have reached a few milestones since the last YAGRGRAM. First we have gone over the 1,200 mark of former crewmen located (1,271 to be exact). Second, we now have 3 ships that have over 100 former crewmen listed. They are the Guardian, Skywatcher and Protector and quite a few of the other ships are approaching the 100 mark.

Since the last YAGRGRAM, 84 others has been added to our list of found crewmen. **If you have information on anyone who has served on any of the ships, please pass it along to me and I will try to locate them.**

YAGR'S Web Page

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

In case you don't know, YAGR'S has had a web page for quite awhile. There are a few pictures of the Tracer in color that recently have been added to the site. In the near future, I hope to add a few of the Protector as she now appears sitting in Norfolk.

Note: When you go to access the web site, the letters YAGRS are case sensitive.

DUES

Have you paid your dues yet? All you have to do to find out is look on the mailing label. If the first line shows a date such as 5/31/00 you have paid. This date shows that you have paid your dues through the date that is shown. If there isn't a date, you have not paid your dues.

It is hoped that those of you who haven't will do so. Your dues support YAGR'S. Without them, nothing will get done. Also when you pay your dues you will receive the updated list of found crewmen from your ship/ships.

If you have paid your dues and you do not see a date on the mailing label or you have not received your membership card, please get in touch with me.

Navy Log Enrollments

Officials at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington are encouraging all Naval personnel to enroll in the Navy Log in Washington.

The names and service information for approximately 240,000 present and former naval personnel have been collected for the log.

The log is a part of America's enduring Naval heritage. A permanent and publicly accessible video register is available for viewing at the Naval Heritage Center next to the Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Ave., midway between the White House and the Capitol, or on the memorial web site, www.lonesailor.org.

For more information call (202) 737-2300 or send a e-mail to ahoy@lonesailor.org.

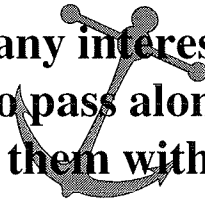


Are You Moving??

If you have moved or are planning a move, please remember to send your new address to YAGR'S. Also include your new phone number. Without you updating us we will lose track of you.

Sea Stories

If you have any interesting stories you would like to pass along, send them in and share them with the rest of us.



Hats

We will be ordering hats again. If you wish to order a hat, send me your name, with ship wanted, how many hats you want and \$15.00 for each hat. Make checks payable to YAGR'S.

Hat orders will have to be received by February 21, 2000.

Reunion Refund Policy

Regarding reunion refunds, if YAGR'S doesn't have to pay, you will receive a refund

We reach a point when a number is given to the tour company or the hotel banquet facilities and we are locked into that number and have to pay for that person whether they show up or not. If we receive your cancellation early enough we can change these numbers without a problem.

Information Request

If you have not returned your information request form please fill this out and send it in.

Look on the mailing label. If there is a hull number after your name you have returned your information request form.

We will be making cuts in our mailing list. If we do not have a request form from you, we will assume you no longer want to receive information about YAGR'S.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

Do you want it listed YES ___ NO ___

SHIP SERVED ON _____

DATE (SUCH AS 1961 TO 1964) _____

RANK/RATE ON SHIP _____

REUNION 2000

YAGR'S
5th Annual Reunion
Minneapolis, MN
June 1,2,3, 2000
REUNION REGISTRATION
\$69.00 PER PERSON

PLEASE RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT NO LATER THAN MAY 10, 2000
PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____

NAME OF SPOUSE/GUEST _____

SHIP SERVED ON _____ DATE ON BOARD _____ RANK/RATE _____

SHIP SERVED ON _____ DATE ON BOARD _____ RANK/RATE _____

Number of people attending _____ X \$69.00 = _____ Enclosed \$ _____

Make all checks payable to YAGR'S

This information will be used for your name tags. Use the name you want printed on your name tag.



YAGR'S PRE-REUNION TOUR



SAINT PAUL GANGSTER TOUR

Wednesday, May 31, 2000
(9:00 am – 2:00 pm)

We'll depart the hotel this morning via deluxe motorcoach with driver at 9:00 am. Shortly after departing, your costumed gangster tour guide will kidnap the motorcoach.

Baby Face Nelson...Machine Gun Kelly...Creepy Karpis...Ma Barker...Those are names Americans were familiar with during Prohibition. St. Paul was more than a quiet, picturesque river town! You'll drive by the place where one local gangster blew up a rival, you'll see where Dillinger had a shoot-out with St. Paul Police and we'll visit the former most-exclusive Speak Easy in Minnesota!



Our guide is the embodiment of the "Untouchables" that busted kegs and hustled thugs off the hoosegow during the days of Prohibition. And watch out for the violin case – we don't think it contains lunch!



Stops will be made along the route at Landmark Center and the newly re-opened St. Paul "Caves." Once the site of famous gangster trials, the restored Federal Courts building still commands respect. This grand edifice has been honored with numerous awards for its architectural genius.

The "Caves" were dug in the early 1800s out of a layer of rock known as St. Peter Sandstone. In the 1800s, a mushroom-growing business was established in the Caves, then a nightclub and restaurant was opened in the 1930s. That night club was known as Castle Royal. If you listen carefully, you can still hear bands such as the Dorsey Brothers and Cab Calloway playing in the stage area with the adjoining dance floor. There is also a fireplace area with bullet holed from the 1930's gangsters in the mantle to remind us of a rowdier era. St. Paul served as a cooling-off area for gangsters, and you'll even see a "Gangster Gallery" to show off some of the Caves' more notorious past visitors.

You will also visit the newest addition to our capital city, the History Center. Built by the Minnesota Historical Society, the Center showcases and preserves the state's historical resources. Museum exhibitions, demonstrations, workshops, etc., provide diverse and changing education and cultural offerings that tell the story of Minnesota's people from earliest times to present. One exhibit, "Minnesota A-Z," features an item or symbol from Minnesota for each letter of the alphabet. Lunch will be on your own in Café Minnesota located in the Minnesota History Center.

PRICE: \$23.00 per person

This tour is offered on a first-come, first-served basis. If too few people register for a tour, it will be canceled and money refunded. Your canceled check or credit card statement will serve as confirmation. Tour departs from the Airport Hilton. For more information call 1-800-747-8687.

Yagr's Pre-Reunion Gangster Tour Registration Form

8363-ST

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

| <u>Tour:</u> | <u>Price:</u> | <u># Tickets:</u> | <u>Total:</u> |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| St. Paul Gangster Tour | \$23.00 per person | x _____ | = \$ _____ |

Please charge my credit card

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Card #: _____ Exp: _____

Card Type: (circle one) V MC D
 AMEX

