



Radar Picket Ships

YAGRGRAM #30

Fall 2003

C/O Harry Miller, 230 West Forest Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860-3318 (401) 724-7278 e-mail YAGR@MSN.COM

Important

Please check the envelope that this YAGRGRAM has come in.

Check to see if a date is above your name on the mailing label. If there is **not a date**, I am asking you to return this form. You may send it by regular mail or you may e-mail me or give me a call to provide the information that is asked for on the form.

To keep the cost of the YAGRGRAMS down, it is important that we send them out to only those of you who want to keep receiving them. Also it has come to my attention that some of them are being sent to former crewmen who have passed away and their families do not want to receive them any longer. The only option I have is to trim our mailing list to those of you who still want to receive the YAGRGRAM.

If you choose not to return the enclosed form, I will have to assume you no longer wish to receive the YAGRGRAM.

I do not want to make these cuts to the mailing list but something has to be done now! The cost of sending the YAGRGRAM out is getting prohibitive based on the amount of dues we have collected to date. We are running well behind what is normally collected at this time of the year.

I know this is an inconvenience but it is the only way that we can get our mailings under control.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ DO YOU WANT YOUR
NUMBER LISTED ?
YES ___ NO ___

SHIP SERVED ON: _____

SHIP SERVED ON: _____

DATE: (such as 1962-1964): _____

DATE: (such as 1962-1964): _____

RANK/RATE ON SHIP: _____

RANK/RATE ON SHIP: _____



**YAGR'S
9th Reunion
Philadelphia, PA
May 27, 28, 29, 2004**

Mark your calendars and plan accordingly.

While we have the hotel and dates set for the reunion, we are still working on setting up the tours. At this time no information is available on where we will be going.

- Thursday May 27, 2004: Check in
- Friday May 28, 2004: group tour.
- Saturday May 29, 2004: in the morning, the breakfast/penny social for the spouses/guests, mens meeting.
Saturday night our banquet.

The hospitality room will be open when there are no scheduled activities.

The host hotel for our reunion will be the

Adam's Mark Hotel Philadelphia
City Ave. and Monument Rd.
Philadelphia, PA 19131

To make your reservations, call
Adam's Mark National line 1-800-444-2326

or

The hotel direct 1-215-581-5000

Let them know that you are with the YAGR'S reunion group to receive our special rate.

If you have any problems, please get in touch with me.

| Room | Single Rate | Double Rate | Triple Rate | QuadRate |
|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Standard | \$85.00 | \$85.00 | \$95.00 | \$105.00 |
| Jr Suite | \$110.00 | \$110.00 | N/A | N/A |

Note: There is free self parking for all overnight hotel guests attending the reunion.

The Adam's Mark is a short distance from downtown Philadelphia and is easily reached by bus or cab. Also within walking distance of the hotel are a few restaurants.

The Adam's Mark Hotel features 515 warmly decorated guestrooms on 23 floors with sweeping views of the dramatic Philadelphia skyline. The hotel also features 59 Junior Executive Suites and 7 f equipped deluxe hospitality suites. All guestrooms are spacious provide a work desk with a separate phone, voicemail, internet and data-port accessibility. Hairdryers, irons and ironing boards, coffee makers, On-Command movies, Sony play station, and video check out are all part of the standard amenities found in the accommodations.

GUEST AMENITIES:

The Adam's Mark Hotel is truly a full service hotel. From the bell staff that will deliver your luggage or call a cab, service starts as you enter. Valet or self-parking is available in the controlled access, 1,000 space parking lot and indoor garage. In the lobby, you will find a beauty salon, gift shop, car rental agency, automatic teller machine, and shoeshine attendant. For those who are inclined to be more active, the health club is designed with fitness in mind. Open daily from 6am-10pm, Nautilus, Lifecycle, Liferower, Stairclimber and other fitness equipment are all available. Two racquetball courts, steam saunas, a whirlpool, and indoor/outdoor pools complete this extensive club.

Visit their web site at www.adamsmark.com to take a virtual tour of the property!

SCHEDULED AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE:

From the airport, you can pick up the Lady Liberty shuttle outside the baggage claim area or dial #27 in the Ground Transportation Center of the airport. Reservations are not required, **but recommended.** Lady Liberty departs the Adam's Mark every hour o quarter hour daily from 6:15 am to 6:15 pm. Departure is from front lobby of the hotel. The cost is \$12 per person, each way.

Reservation number: 215-724-8888.

Pre-Reunion Tour

We will once again be having a pre-reunion tour. The tour will be set up for May, 26, 2004. The final details will be sent out with the next YAGRGRAM.

Do not send money yet!

Please do not send me any money for your reunion registration at this time. The rate has not been set yet and most likely will not be the same as last year's reunion.

You can, however, reserve your hotel room at this time. In fact, I recommend that you reserve your room as soon as possible. From the feedback I have been getting about the upcoming reunion, I think it will be our biggest yet.

The reunion registration form will be sent out with the next YAGRGRAM.



To Go Or Not To Go

You haven't seen them in decades, yet they greet you with open arms. You have shared something life changing with them, and you share a bond that no one else does. This is the experience many veterans have when they attend reunions and see old comrades.

However, some are reluctant to attend. One who recently attended his first military reunion after 30 years, described his fears. "I thought too much time had passed, and they wouldn't be the people I'd known in my youth. I was apprehensive that I wouldn't be remembered. This is a common feeling many veterans get when the reunion invitation arrives. Others don't want to allow bad memories to surface, or worry that they won't remember people, so they avoid going.

Despite initial reservations, the majority of veterans who attend reunions are glad they did. They come away with a different outlook and an opportunity to form new memories with people they once cared about. Most say the first one is the hardest, but once they have gone they look forward to the next one.

The above article came from excerpts taken from a VFW magazine article published January, 2003

Philadelphia weather in May:
Average temperature 62.9°
Average high 73.1°
Average low 52.7°



Spouses/Guests



It is expected that we will have quite a few first timers attending this year's reunion. Here is what to expect at the Saturday morning breakfast/penny social.

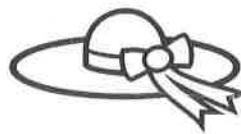
First off, all spouses/guests are invited to have breakfast with us (there is no charge for this). We usually start around 9am and it lasts until noon or so.

We ask each person to bring a small gift that will be placed on a table to be raffled off. We do this by placing tickets (they are supplied to you at no cost) by the gift and a ticket is drawn to see who wins that particular item. The item you bring should cost in the \$5.00 to \$10.00 range. Handcrafted items are welcome also. Bring a gift you would like to win.

For the hat contest, we decorate a hat with a certain theme. This year it is "patriotism." Just remember, this is for fun. You do not have to be a creative artist or haberdasher to win.

A few things to remember:

- (1) The breakfast/penny social is set up for the spouses/guests, so don't be bashful about joining in. Come on down!
- (2) Don't go overboard on the cost of the gifts.
- (3) The hat contest is just for fun, so go for it.



June 1, 2003 - May 31, 2004
YAGR'S Dues

**Dues are now due and being
accepted for the above year**

Dues are \$17.00 the first year you pay your dues and \$15.00 each following year. **If you have paid your dues, there will be a date above your name on the mailing label on the envelope this YAGRGRAM came in.** If there is no date, your dues are not paid.

If you have paid your dues and there is not a date on the label or you have not received your membership card and your updated list of former crewmen from your ship/ships, please get in touch with me.

Make checks payable to YAGR'S

e-mail messages.

As a reminder, when you send me an e-mail message, please put something in the subject area that indicates it is coming from someone associated with YAGR'S.

Because of all the viruses being sent in e-mail, I don't open anything I can't identify.



YAGR'S Exhibit

Onboard the Battleship Massachusetts

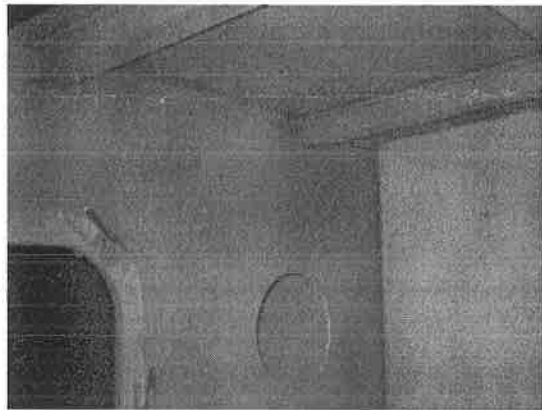
Fall River, MA



Work accomplished

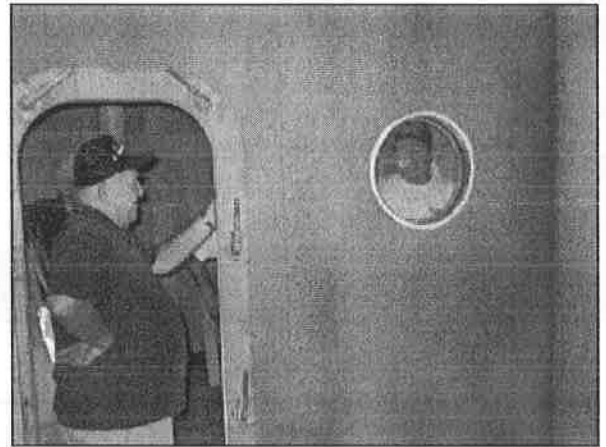
In the weeks preceding the planned work weekend, Roland and Harry made a few trips to the Battleship.

The bulkheads were extended to the overhead, structural shapes (I beams) were made out of wood to detail areas for the display and the priming of the raw wood on the outside of the display was completed.



Shot of I beams on overhang in front of radar room

We also got back on track on the display for the two liberty ship models that we started last winter that were pushed aside by cold temperatures in the work area and then by the reunion and work starting on the radar room display. This work will be a fill in when we can break away from our main project: the radar room.



Tom Manning looking in on Tom Giardina working on porthole

August 22, 23, 24, 2003

Battleship Massachusetts

Six former picket ship crewmen showed up for another work week end: Roland Cote (AGR-10), Jack Floyd (AGR-11, YR-65) Tom Giardina (AGR-3), Tom Manning, (AGR-4), Harry Miller (AGR-11, YR-65) and Al Nannini (AGR-15).

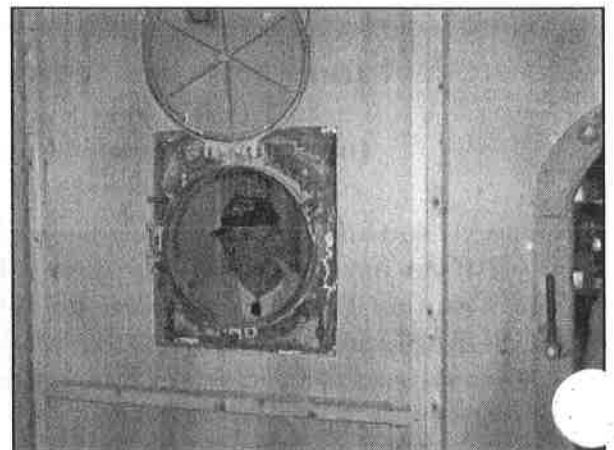
We split up into a couple of groups to accomplish the planned work load. Jack spent his time with the ongoing problem of the lighting on the history of radar display. He seems to think he has the problem solved. It seems the ballast in the fluorescent lights needs to be shielded. Hopefully Jack has come up with a solution. He also took care of another lighting problem that we had in the compartment.

Saturday, Al, Roland, Tom Giardina and Tom Manning did some re-work on the display for the ships plaques. We noticed that a couple of the plaques were not hanging straight. We took the display down and this was soon corrected. We also noticed that one of the commissioning pennants was sagging, so this display was taken down also and the problem was corrected. With the displays down we were able to paint the brackets that supported them. We could not do this when we welded them up as it was too cold to do any painting. While all of this was going on, Harry and whoever else was free at the time installed the porthole.

Al has been dealing with Richard Angelini (the USS Joseph P. Kennedy's curator) in regards to getting equipment off the Kennedy for use in our exhibit. The Kennedy is redoing their CIC and have some excess items that are of interest to us. We are planning to spend some time on the Destroyer in October to help remove and transport this excess gear to the Battleship and the exhibit. Our next work weekend will be in October also.



Roland Cote, Al Nannini, Tom Manning, Jack Floyd, Tom Giardina



Inside shot of porthole, with Roland Cote on outside of radar room

YAGR'S Wants You!

We are always on the lookout for anyone who would like to assist on the YAGR'S display. As noted we will be on the ship this October. While it would be great if you could spend the whole weekend onboard, you do not have to.

Here is a sample weekend schedule. On the Friday one or two of us will be onboard most of the day, and usually a couple of men will show up late afternoon or early evening. We will then go out and have supper and return back to the ship where we are put up in the Admiral's staff state rooms. Saturday we go out for breakfast, returning back to the ship for work. We eat lunch on board (this will be paid for you), then work until 3:30 or 4. Sunday we have been eating breakfast (this will be paid for you) on the ship and working until noon or so before we knock off for the day and head home.

This is just a rough schedule. If you decide to help, you can make your own hours,



Sea Stories Needed!!!

We are always looking for sea stories to publish in the YAGRGRAMS. If you feel you have something of interest, send it in.

We hope that you will take this opportunity to send in any articles that relate to your time spent on the radar picket ships. And, as a side benefit, you just might hear from some of your former shipmates who decide to get in touch with you and talk about old times.

Robert Kuchem (AGR-14, 1962-63)

Radar picket duty sometimes left us with lots of time on our hands, and the Navy foresaw a need for diversions. When the Liberty ships were renovated into AGR's, spaces originally designed for cargo were equipped with woodworking equipment, hobby shops, a weight room, and a basketball court. And if these did not fully quench the crew's thirst for off-watch activities, fishing was just the cure we needed. The waters in which we steamed were fantastic "fishing holes" for albacore and Pacific King Salmon.

We normally steamed in our picket circle at a cruising speed of 3 knots: just right for trolling. Our boatswain mates rigged iron pipes 15 to 20 feet long which were suspended perpendicular to the ship from the main deck gunwales. Fishing lines were threaded through rings on the pipes to make them into super strong AGR fishing rods. On a busy afternoon, as many as 15 fishing lines would be strung from the rods with their baited hooks trailing in the water 50 yards or so behind the slowly moving ship. The bridge lookouts were instructed to watch for schools of albacore, and the OOD's had orders to steer for them. By the end of some pickets, our freezers were stocked full of albacore that we took home to wives, girlfriends, and a kind of fish black-market. All of the AGR's in Radar Squadron One were involved in the hunt for albacore, and ships returning from pickets flew "Albacore Pennants" to denote how many were caught.

The 3-INCH, 50 CALIBER DUAL PURPOSE GUN

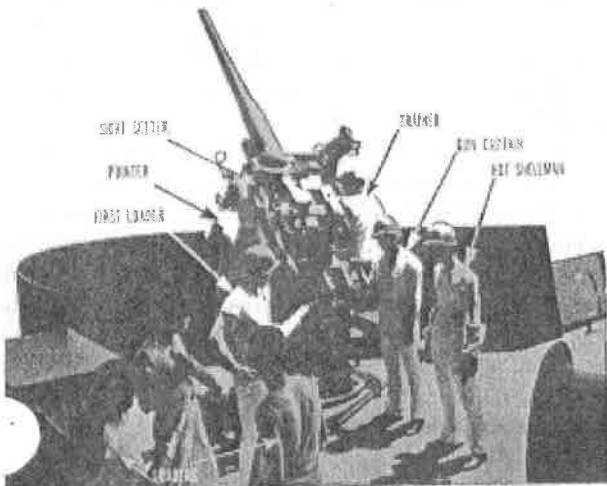


FIGURE 24-3.—Gun crew of the 3"/50 in position.

The 3"/50 is a minor caliber gun. It is a defensive weapon and called dual purpose because it is designed for defense against aircraft while the aircraft are still far away or very high up, and for work against light surface craft and submarines on the surface.

The 3"/50 is supported by a pedestal-type mount. Its maximum range is at least five miles and its ceiling around 21,500 feet. It fires a 13 pound projectile. The gun elevates 87° and depresses 10°.

Fixed ammunition is used and the projectiles may be common anti-aircraft, high explosive, shrapnel or illuminating. Cartridges are packed four to a box, the weight being about 125 pounds. Each cartridge weights approximately 25 pounds.

The above information was attained from the 1944 addition of the Bluejackets' Manual.

Tom Kollus, (AGR-11, 1960-63)

Sent the below information

Part One

**The
Lessons of the Liberties**

By

ROBERT T. YOUNG

Chairman and President
American Bureau of Shipping
Published 1974

The PATRICK HENRY slid down the ways and splashed into the waters of Chesapeake Bay on September 27, 1941. The day had been designated "Liberty Fleet Day" and during the nationwide ceremonies 13 vessels of other types were launched, but the PATRICK HENRY was the first of the Liberty ships. In a message to shipyard workers on the occasion, President Roosevelt refrained from calling the Liberties "dreadful-looking objects" as he had done when announcing the emergency ship program in January.

The Liberties were 10,865 deadweight ton, full-scantling vessels, with a raked stem and cruiser stem, a deck house, and seven watertight bulkheads. Yet they were instantly dubbed "ugly ducklings" and "sea scows." They were considered expendable, with a short service life probable, maybe making only one or two voyages under wartime conditions.

Should any survive the war, it was thought they would be of doubtful use. Their 2,500 horsepower engines gave a speed of 10 to 11 knots, too slow for commercial service, or for escaping submarine attack. One critic predicted that a Liberty ship would "stand on a wave and the ends would shake like jelly."

However, something had to be done quickly, or the "defense effort", as it was still being called, would fail. In April of 1941, for example, almost 800,000 deadweight tons of shipping was lost and the sea lanes to England were being gradually strangled. Even with a U.S. buildup starting in January of 1941, it took until the end of 1942 for construction to catch up with ship losses. Massive numbers of simplified, quickly-built vessels were absolutely necessary to avoid a military disaster.

Altogether 2,710 Liberty ships were built between 1941 and 1944. These ships changed the course of World War II, and made the eventual allied victory possible. They eluded submarines, withstood air attacks, and floundered ruggedly through storms from the Arctic to the South Pacific to deliver the troops, weapons, and supplies which turned the fortunes of battle around the world. More than 200 were casualties of the war, sunk or only partly salvageable. Almost all the rest have been sent unceremoniously to the shipbreaker's yard after 20 to 25 years of uneventful economic life, like the PATRICK HENRY itself. Some have been transformed to new purposes, some met strange fates in service, and a few are still tramping around the world.

Not a bad record for "emergency" ships conceived in desperation, built in great haste, and shoved into a hostile sea. The experience gained from this wartime effort proved a valuable legacy, whose lessons are still being studied and applied. One of the lasting truths is that what counts is not how much you have but what you do with it, and this holds for nations as well as for individuals.

Without adequate facilities for maritime transportation the industrial capacity of the United States would be virtually dependent upon the willingness of others to carry our imports and exports. Foresight and determination make it possible to do the seemingly impossible under both normal as well as emergency conditions.

Admiral Land of the Maritime Commission stated another universal truth in this way, "If you want fast ships, fast shipbuilding, fast women, or fast horses, you pay through the nose."

Without the Merchant Marine Act of 1936 which created the Maritime Commission, the price of victory in World War II might have been much higher. As it was, by the end of 1940 there were only 19 shipyards in the U.S. with a total of 53 berths capable of building ocean-going merchant vessels over 400 feet in length. Of these, 7 were small, fledgling yards developed with the aid of the Maritime Commission. Shipyard employment had doubled since mid-1939 to around 47,000 people working on commercial vessels. Most importantly, they were gaining experience on techniques for building C-type "standard" ships."

The coming of the war forced the development of the Liberty ship as an "emergency standard" cargo carrier which could be built in new yards because increased Navy building took over most of the established yards. This resulted in the construction of shipyards where you might see emergency ships being built while the yard itself was being completed.

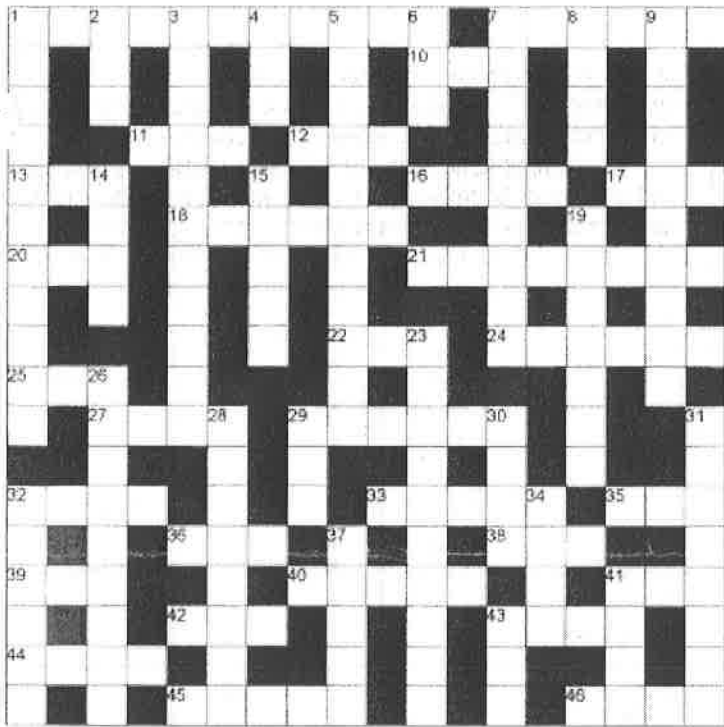
In all, 18 mostly new yards containing 210 slipways, with a work force which swelled to over 650,000 people by mid-1943, built the Liberties. The new workers included housewives, farmers, clergy-men, thousands of unskilled persons who had never been in a shipyard before, and many with unrelated skills. One former dam-builder was heard to ask, "When do we pour the keel?"

By training each worker in one or two tasks, using sub-assembly methods to the utmost, applying mass production technology, and building a series of identical vessels, enormous savings in slipway building times were achieved. The PATRICK HENRY was built in 150 days from keel-laying to launching. On the average, the second Liberty out of a yard took only half the time of the first to build, and the tenth needed only one-fifth the time. Some yards achieved a rate of about 17 days from keel-laying to launching, though this could be beaten on occasion. The Permanente Yard No. 2 near Oakland, California, set the record with the ROBERT E. PEARY, 4 days, 15 hours, and 30 minutes.

Such speedy completion was made possible by welding large sub-assemblies elsewhere in the yard and then bringing them together for final assembly on the ways, a technique daring in those days but today a standard shipbuilding method. Welding was a somewhat risky procedure since the first large "all-welded" merchant ship had only been launched in 1937.

In the face of such uncertainty, each yard was allowed to choose its own assembly sequence and the amount of riveting used, though uniformity was encouraged. American Bureau of Shipping surveyors cooperating with the Maritime Commission assured quality of workmanship. From the steel mills to the outfitting docks, ABS surveyors had to balance demands for haste and shortcuts against the need for sea-worthiness and safety in the Liberty ships. Their judgement was called upon every day during the crucial period when every delay and failure was a serious blow, while the tide of war surged remorselessly toward our shores.

Part two will be in the next YAGRGRAM.



*** DOWN ***

- 1 Loose thread on a uniform
- 2 Sailor
- 3 Preliminary survey
- 4 Wallet cards
- 5 Air Force radar stations off the east coast
- 6 To drive against with violence
- 7 Invoice of cargo
- 8 W. alliance
- 9 Engine location
- 14 Blue and ___
- 15 Locators mascot
- 19 Butt can
- 23 Navy lottery
- 26 Research center
- 28 Refusal
- 29 Equip with weapons
- 30 Nuclear weapon
- 31 Search the skies for
- 32 AGR-2 ___ B. Kitchin
- 34 Tall tail
- 37 Aquatic mammal
- 41 Smallest piece of a simple substances
- 43 Ultrahigh frequency

*** ACROSS ***

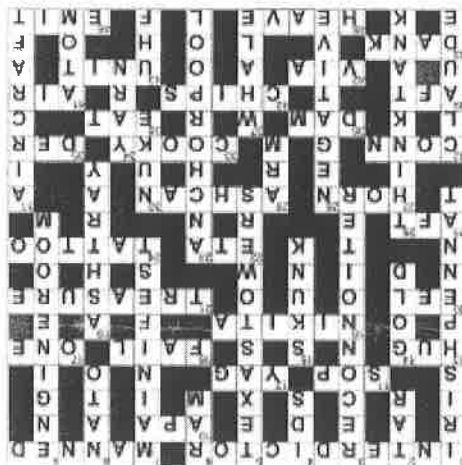
- 1 AGR-13
- 7 Having people on board
- 10 Attack transport
- 11 Drench
- 12 Miscellaneous service craft
- 13 To stay close to
- 16 No success
- 17 ___ ship on station at a time
- 18 ___ Khrushchev
- 20 Snake like fish
- 21 ___ Island
- 22 Expected time of arrival
- 24 Pictures on the skin
- 25 Direction of the stern
- 27 Fog ___
- 29 Depth charge
- 32 To direct the steering of a ship
- 33 Ship's cook
- 35 Radar picket escort ship
- 36 Impound
- 38 Mess deck activity
- 39 Direction of the stern
- 40 Ship's carpenter
- 41 The mixture of gases
- 42 By way of
- 43 Group regarded as one
- 44 Unpleasantly wet
- 45 To pull on a rope
- 46 Send out



Crossword Puzzle

I will try to have a crossword puzzle in every YAGRGRAM, but I will need your help. I need words along with the clue for the puzzle. I have built up a data base of over 1,000 words but more is needed. What I am looking for are words that deal with the picket ships, liberty ships, the Navy, your rating or anything nautical. Keep it clean!

Send me your words along with the clue. As I receive them, they will be added to the data base. This can be a fun feature for the YAGRGRAMS.



Crewmen Located

1,876 Located

35 former crewmen have been added to our list since the last YAGRGRAM went out. If you have any information on former crewmen, get in touch with me.



Moving

Remember when you are moving to send us your new address and phone number. If you have just recently moved and not done so, please do. We have lost track of 1 former crewman since the last YAGRGRAM went out because he failed to do so.



If you have placed an order for an item and you have not received it yet, please get in touch with me.



New Item
8.5 oz classic military
coffee cup with full color
logo of YAGR'S

The YAGR'S logo, USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3, USS LOCATOR YAGR-6, USS PROTECTOR AGR-11 and USS TRACER AGR-15 ship emblem hat/lapel pins are in color and are 1 inch in diameter.

Harvard Square 7oz. long sleeve denim shirt with double needle tailoring, button down collar, seven wood tone buttons and a left chest pocket. It has a silhouette of a picket ship with your ship's name and hull number embroidered on it.

Lapel/hat pin silhouette of a picket ship is in color and is 1-1/2 inches long.

Hat specialty devices AG, BM, BT, DC, DK, GM, IC, EM, EN, ET, HM,*HT, MM, MR, MS, QM, RD, RM, SH, SK, SM, YN, are on hand, but in a limited quantity. As I run out of them I will then have to order more. This could take up to 6 weeks to receive. Specify device desired.

*New Shipfitter Rating

Please Note: All Orders must reach me by **November 22, 2003**. This is when orders will be placed with the suppliers. It can take up to six weeks after that for you to receive your order.

The proceeds of items sold from the Ships Store will go towards the future expansion and upkeep of our exhibit onboard the Battleship Massachusetts. **The only exceptions will be for the Ship emblem pins. These proceeds will be used to obtain other ship emblems.**



| ITEM | EACH | QUANTITY | SUB TOTAL |
|---|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| HAT HULL # _____ | \$19.00 | X | = |
| DENIM SHIRT HULL # _____ | S, M, L, XL \$33.00 | X | = |
| SIZE _____ | XXL \$35.00 | X | = |
| YAGR'S LOGO HAT/LAPEL PIN | \$4.50 | X | = |
| USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3 HAT/LAPEL PIN | \$4.50 | X | = |
| USS LOCATOR YAGR-6 HAT/LAPEL PIN | \$4.50 | X | = |
| USS PROTECTOR AGR-11 HAT/LAPEL PIN | \$4.50 | X | = |
| USS TRACER AGR-15 HAT/LAPEL PIN | \$4.50 | X | = |
| SKYWATCHER AGR-3 LOCATOR YAGR-6 HAT/LAPEL PINS | BOTH PINS \$8.00 | X | = |
| PROTECTOR AGR-11 TRACER AGR-15 HAT/LAPEL PINS | BOTH PINS \$8.00 | X | = |
| RADAR PICKET SHIP PIN 1-1/2" LONG | \$4.50 | X | = |
| PO1, PO2, PO3 CROW FOR HAT PO _____ | \$4.50 | X | = |
| HAT SPECIALTY DEVICE SPECIFY DEVICE _____ | \$4.75 | X | = |
| COFFEE CUP | \$15.00 | X | = |
| MAKE CHECKS OUT TO YAGR'S SHIPPING IS INCLUDED | | | TOTAL \$ _____ |
| YOUR NAME _____ | | | |