



Radar Picket Ships

YAGRGRAM #31

Winter 2003

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

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

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

The above rates are also good for three days before and after
the reunion dates.

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

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

The Adam's Mark has 520 rooms, so if you get your reservation
in on time you will have no problems getting a room at
the hotel.



Thursday May 27, 2004

Check into hospitality room to pick up your reunion packet.

The hospitality room will be kept open as much as possible
during the reunion.

Friday May 28, 2004

Breakfast buffet followed by our group tour of historic
Philadelphia. Note: Buses will take us to the historic area
where we will have advanced "timed" tickets for Independence
Hall. You will then be free to visit the many area sights
on your own. Lunch will be on your own.

Saturday morning May 29, 2004

Crewmens business meeting

Spouses/guests breakfast/penny social and hat contest

Saturday night May 29, 2004

Our farewell banquet at the hotel.

Dress for the evening: Men usually wear a suit or a
sport jacket, or if you wish, your uniform; the women wear a
dress or suit.

In regards to our Saturday evening banquet, the banquet
room we will be using can accommodate up to 1,200 people.
We will not have to worry about space limitations as we have
in the past.

Spouses/guests

Breakfast/penny social and hat contest

Remember, all spouses/guests are invited to the Saturday morning function. There is no cost to you as it is part of the reunion. As a reminder, bring a gift that will be raffled off. The gift should be in the \$5.00 to \$10.00 price range. Bring something that you would like to win. Also, don't forget to bring a hat and decorate it with a theme of "patriotism."

Optional Pre-Reunion Tour

Cost \$59.00

Wednesday May 26, 2004

We will depart the Adam's Mark hotel by bus to tour the Battleship New Jersey located in Camden, NJ. After we leave the ship, we will return to Philadelphia where we will board the Spirit of Philadelphia for a 2 hour luncheon cruise. We expect to depart the hotel at 8:30am and be back by 2:45pm.

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 on the quarter hour daily from 6:15 am to 6:15 pm. Departure is from the front lobby of the hotel. The cost is \$12 per person, each way.

Reservation number: 215-724-8888.

Reunion 2004

The feedback I have been getting leads me to believe that this will be the largest reunion we have held to date. We have set aside a block of rooms at the hotel based on how many I think will sign up. **I have until March 10, 2004 to decide whether to cut or add rooms to the numbers set aside.** If I see we need more rooms, I will try to arrange for more or, if need be, have rooms removed from the

block set aside for us. What this all boils down to is reserve your room by March 10, 2004 to insure that you will get a room at our reunion rate.

Anyone who reserves their room after that date runs the risk of paying more for their room. Also we have set aside 3 buses for the pre-tour and 7 for the group tour. If more are needed, I will find time to have more set aside. If you have any questions, please contact me at (401) 724-7278 or e-mail yagr@msn.com

Dates to remember

Room count to hotel will be modified to reflect numbers signing up for the reunion on March 10, 2004. Reserve your room today! Your reunion registration, pre-reunion tour and reunion shirt form must be received by me no later than April 1, 2004.

Don't be disappointed. These are drop dead dates. Please sign up before these dates. It will make things easier for everyone as a lot of planning has to be done even before the above listed dates.

Thank you!

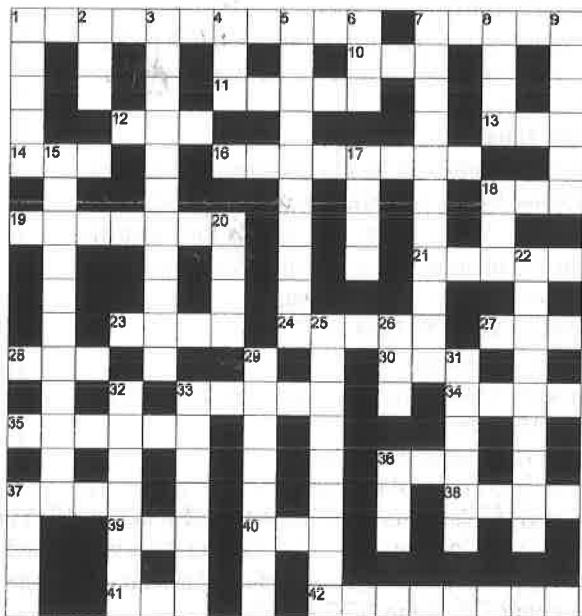
I want to thank Tom and Dee Yerger (AGR-8) for their help with this year's reunion.

Trying to locate

Kay (Jones) Schultz is trying to get some information on her father, RD3 Donald R. Jones who passed away in 1993. He served on the USS Guardian AGR-1 from September 1955 to March 1959.

We published her request before and she did have a phone call but she was out of town and the person did not leave his phone number.

Kay (Jones) Schultz, P.O. BOX 155, German Valley, IL (815) 362-2224 e-mail is Xray_Lady57@yahoo.com



*** ACROSS ***

- 1 East coast reserve fleet site
- 7 Walk the
- 10 Tic tac toe winner
- 11 The curved part of ship's hull where the sides and flat bottom meet

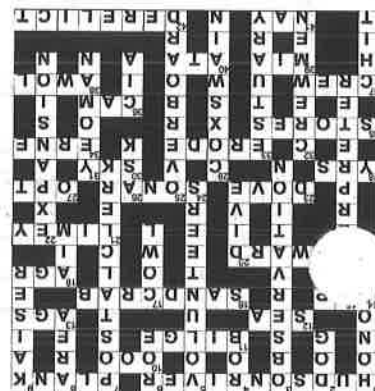
- 12 A great body of salt water
- 13 Survey ship
- 14 A stretch of broken water in sea or river
- 16 Shipyard worker
- 18 Radar Picket Ship
- 19 Wardroom mess attendant
- 21 An english sailor
- 23 Bird used as a sign of peace
- 24 Underwater tracking device
- 27 Make a choice
- 28 Years
- 30 Upper air
- 33 Eat away at
- 34 Sea eagle
- 35 Supplies
- 36 Rotating machine part
- 37 Labor force on a ship
- 38 Absent without leave
- 39 Missing in action
- 40 Auxiliary tug
- 41 Vote of no
- 42 Ship abandoned by Captain and crew

*** DOWN ***

- 1 High respect
- 2 A type of bolt and nut used to secure wtd
- 3 Action of noticing
- 4 To plunder
- 5 Works on the picket ship display
- 6 Fish eggs
- 7 Sells stamps on ship
- 8 Length times width

- 9 His shipyards were famous for building liberty ships
- 15 One of two models in yagrs exhibit
- 17 Bell shaped opening of a ventilator
- 18 Point a weapon
- 20 Descend below the water
- 22 Triple engine
- 25 Over the side of a ship
- 26 Seek information
- 29 In charge of boat
- 31 Performs clerical duties
- 32 Reunion attendees
- 33 Tidal river mouth
- 36 Spy group
- 37 Voucher

Words and clues are still needed. Please send them to me.



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

Sent the below information

Part Two

**The
Lessons of the Liberties**

By

ROBERT T. YOUNG

Chairman and President
American Bureau of Shipping

Published 1974

When the SCHENECTADY, a new T2 tanker and not a Liberty, broke in two tied up at the outfitting docks, panicky doubts about welded ships spread rapidly. ABS was asked to investigate by the Maritime Commission. Recommendations were made after the SCHENECTADY was repaired and subjected to severe hogging and sagging tests which it passed satisfactorily. We suggested some design and procedural changes in the Liberties intended to avert similar problems without delaying shipbuilding efforts. Looking back, in 1945 I wrote, "The record of these quickly built welded ships has more than justified the adoption of welding in view of the number of vessels built, their ability to withstand enemy action without fatal damage, and the comparative ease with which repairs can be made to them. In fact, considering the 5,000 or more welded ships built under the most adverse conditions, the loss through structural failure of a half dozen is less to be wondered at than the entirely satisfactory service given by hundreds of them when they were urgently needed."

Despite conflicting claims to the contrary, no vessel exactly like the Liberty had ever been built before. A confusing array of design modifications intended to simplify construction were suggested by a variety of people and organizations. One change recommended by ABS was the reduction of the number of plate thicknesses in the proposed design from 75 to 27, thereby helping to simplify procurement during the wartime steel supply crisis. Another change was "on paper" only, but may have been influential at a time when each ton of supplies delivered to the battle line was important. Since the Liberties were to be classed by ABS, our technical staff was called in to give plan approval of the completed design. After careful study we discovered that the scantlings specified were more than adequate for the design draft, which in fact could have been deeper. Accordingly the basic Liberty dry cargo carrier was classed at 10,865 deadweight tons, an increase of 430 deadweight tons capacity. Since 2,580 such Liberties were ultimately built, this calculation increased the aggregate deadweight available for the war effort by over one million tons.

The first Liberty ship to fall victim of the war was the JOHN ADAMS, completed in March of 1942 at Permanente Yard No. 2. It was sunk in the Pacific in May of the same year. Almost 50 Liberties were casualties during their maiden voyages. One of the worst experiences for a ship during the war was the murderous Murmansk run.

Convoy PQ17 sailed from Iceland in June 1942 with 33 vessels, including 6 new Liberties heavily laden with vital war materiel. The immediate escort included 4 cruisers, 2 submarines, and 10 destroyers, covered by 2 battleships, a carrier, 3 more cruisers, and numerous destroyers in the general area. Even so, massive air attacks decimated the convoy and the ships were forced to scatter

when a threat of assault by enemy battleships developed. Eleven vessels, including the Liberty ships SAMUEL CHASE and BENJAMIN HARRISON survived the ordeal. Winston Churchill called it "one of the most melancholy episodes in the whole of the war." The 39 ships in the next convoy, PQ18, fared somewhat better with a massively reinforced close-in escort including antiaircraft vessels steaming inside the convoy columns, a special attack force of 16 destroyers and a heavy cruiser, and a screen of patrolling submarines. This time 20 battle-scarred ships, including 5 of the 6 Liberties which started the voyage, reached Murmansk in September 1942.

The Liberty ship could at times be wickedly unobliging to would-be sinkers. The CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT was torpedoed by a plane and two submarines before it actually went down in the Barents Sea.

The RICHARD BLAND was hit by a submarine torpedo while in the Arctic Ocean and led its attacker on a 5 day chase almost to Iceland before it was caught and sunk. The WILLIAM HOOPER resisted all efforts by escort ships to sink it by shell fire after being disabled by enemy air attack in the Barents Sea. Later it was sent to the bottom by an enemy U-boat. Though lightly-armed, several Liberty ships fought off or helped sink attacking submarines. However, they could not escape fast enemy surface warships. Thus on September 27, 1942, when the STEPHEN HOPKINS saw the powerful commerce raider STIER emerge from a bank of haze in the South Atlantic, the end of her cruise was in sight. The STIER's six 5.9-inch guns blasted the STEPHEN HOPKINS, leaving her sinking and on fire within 20 minutes. But the STEPHEN HOPKINS' single 5-inch gun had gotten off 40 shots before her sinking and 15 of the 31-pound shells had been hits, knocking out the STIER'S engine room, torpedo tubes, and rudder, and turning her into an inferno. As the survivors of the STEPHEN HOPKINS rowed into the mist towards Brazil they heard the STIER blow up.

The inherent strength of the Liberty ship's hull plus its watertight compartments made survival possible in the face of damage more severe than any pre-war merchant ship could have sustained.

The WILLIAM WILLIAMS was in the Pacific in May of 1943 when a torpedo struck its port side near the forward bulkhead of No. 5 hold, shattering plates and frames and blasting a hole through the starboard side shell plating. The shaft tunnel was smashed, the shaft pedestals blown away or damaged, and bulkheads crumpled. The WILLIAM WILLIAMS settled deep in the water with her decks awash. Abandoned and later reboarded, she was able to reach Fiji with the help of a tug, where it was found that 55 feet of after shell plating was completely missing. The WILLIAM WILLIAMS was repaired and returned to service.

The ROBERT F. HOKE was torpedoed in the Arabian Sea in December of 1943 but would not sink. It was towed all over the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in search of repair facilities, and at one point was abandoned and left adrift in a storm for almost two weeks. It was towed to Bombay where it was used as a training ship before being discarded and beached four years after the torpedoing—still with a 40-foot hole in the side.

The NATHANIEL BACON fell victim to mines in 1945 and was declared a total loss, but six years later its stern was joined to the forepart of the BERT WILLIAMS 2ND and steamed for 12 more years of economic life as the BOCADASSE.

Some Liberties met unknown fates, like the CHIEF JOSEPH which, under the name HAI CHANG, disappeared off the coast of China in 1962 with a cargo of silver and gold ore. Some Liberties which were turned over to other nations have never been clearly

accounted for. But we can trace the history of most of the Liberty fleet in the postwar years when hundreds of these ships revitalized the maritime commerce of devastated nations. Most of these "five-year" ships had useful, undramatic economic lives, or were put on reserve status should another emergency arise, until the mid 1960's when these "workhorses of the fleet" began to be sent more and more frequently to the scrapyards. Today there are 31 Liberties being operated as cargo ships, 4 of which remain in ABS class. The JANET LORD ROPER, now named FLORIDA STATE, has undergone extensive alterations and conversions. The YUCATAN formerly the SAM-LOSSIE, the ALEXANDROS KORYZIS formerly the I.N. VAN NUYS, and the LSCO BULKTRAIN formerly the GEORGE E. WALDO, remain much as they were when they left the builder's yard. The others are under Russian, Chinese, or Polish registry with a handful in other nations.

Whole Liberties or parts of them have been converted into barges, docks, fish-processing plants, and storage containers in doz-

ens of places around the world. Right here in New York we have the JOHN W. BROWN, which has been used by the Board of Education for over 25 years for maritime training. One Liberty, the CHARLES H. CUGLE, even sailed right into the atomic age, becoming the first floating nuclear electric-generating plant, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and renamed STURGIS.

How was it possible for the Liberty ships, practically together in huge numbers by the simplest and fastest way available, built from untested plans by thousands of inexperienced workers, to possess the quality and endurance they had? The answer may be indicated by what Admiral Land told Congress in 1944. He said, "I would be a stupid ass to come up here and tell you that we are running this with any degree of perfection. We are not. We are just doing the very best we can with the tools we have." And that, gentlemen, may well be the most important lesson to be learned today from the Liberty ship era—do the very best you can with the tools you have.

A book that might be of interest to some.

Yo Harry,

I am writing to announce that I have written a fictional tale of life aboard a YAGR. Title is "God Wore an Orange Cap." Author is Karl Boesenhofer and the publisher is 1st Books Library. If you would be so kind sir, would you put this piece of info in your next newsletter.

New work of Fiction:

God Wore an Orange Cap ISBN 1-41079394-x

Author: Karl Boesenhofer

(CW03 Electronics Officer, USS Guardian, AGR1)

Publisher: 1st Books Library

Cost: Paperback edition \$12.25

Hardcover edition \$15.95

Order by calling toll-free 1-888-280-7715

On-line order URL is www.1stbooks.com & enter author's name and book title.

This is dark humor Harry. It just might get some people hot under the collar but what the hey, I had to write this thing and it has been in the works for over ten years now. If the reader will just remember that it is FICTION and maintains his/her sense of humor it's a good read if I do say so myself. Anyone who orders the book and wants me to sign it for them can just bring it to the next reunion here in Philly and I would be happy to oblige them.

Sincerely

Karl Boesenhofer (AGR-1)

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 have not been paid.

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

Make checks payable to YAGR'S

Andrea Doria information.

I know that a few ships were within a 100 miles or so of the Andrea Doria when she sunk and none of them were involved in the rescue of the passengers; but if you have any knowledge of radio transmissions or anything in regards to her, please get any information you might have to 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 3 former crewman since the last YAGRGRAM went out because they failed to do so.

YAGRGRAM's

A form was sent along with the last YAGRGRAM. Quite a few of you have returned it, but there are still some who have not. I have removed 150 people from our mailing list because they have not returned the form. Others are in line to be removed. Please get back to me by sending me your name, address, telephone number and ship served on with dates.

The whole idea of this request is to make sure that only those

who wish to receive the YAGRGRAM's keep on getting them. In other words, they are reaching warm bodies.

The returned forms have had a second benefit. A lot of information has been corrected and / or updated.

Check the mailing label on the envelope that this YAGRGRAM came in. If there is nothing above your name, your need to get the requested information to me.



Dan Moore (AGR-9, 1962-65)

While the Investigator was on station we got the word that a sail boat was enroute from Bermuda to Boston when she hit a storm and lost her mast. She was floundering in some pretty heavy seas. We were the closest ship to her, so we received orders to go to her assistance. On the way to her position we made our preparations to handle anything which she might need; food, water, medical supplies, pumps, etc.

When we got close we lowered a whale boat loaded with all the equipment to help the sail boat. That little whale boat was in danger itself in those heavy seas, but it was the law of the sea to give help to a ship in trouble. The gallant crew of the whale boat, using all of their nautical skills, managed to bring their boat alongside the sail boat, and, while being tossed about (can you imagine being in a whale boat in 20 foot seas and 30 knot winds?), the boat officer called out to the mastless sail boat, "Ahoy, the Black Hawk, (for that was her name) can we be of any assistance to you?" From the interior of the floundering, helpless sail boat came a drunken voice, "have ya got any shigarettes?" To make a long story short, we learned that the people on the Black Hawk feared that if they were taken off their boat anyone, by the right of salvage, could take possession of the hulk and its contents, so they were planning on drinking all of the booze they had on board before they would leave the boat.

We had one PO'd whale boat crew that returned to the ship. Since the people on board didn't want our help, we notified the Coast Guard which sent out a cutter which towed the sail boat ashore.

Stephen Henry (AGR-7, 1959-1962)

When I reported aboard the USS Picket (AGR 7) in April 1959, "Turn To" was one of the first of the crew to greet me on the quarterdeck. He was a portly little guy who was greatly favored by our gruff, mustang C.O., LCDR Hoskinson. "Turn" as he was called for short, could be found anyplace on the ship. At sea, he liked the warmth of the engine room on cold days and most afternoons he enjoyed short naps in the dark calm of CIC. During heavy weather he swaggered the decks like an old salt on his sea legs, unfazed by the rolling and pitching of the ship. Dinner always found him in the wardroom, next to the captain.

Turn To was the ship's dog, a four year old beagle. During our time at sea on station, Turn was a calm, friendly dog, well liked by everyone, even the deck crew who had extra cleanup because of him. But Turn To changed when we were relieved by a sister ship after a month on station. Heading home, the engineers would fine tune the big three-cylinder reciprocating steam engine to produce maximum revolutions of the screw. Everybody's attitude would change at the anticipation of returning to our home port, Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. But it was Turn To who became most excited. When he felt the ship's vibration as the bridge ordered full speed ahead, he would whine and run around in circles. With a bone in her teeth, the Picket raced along at 11 knots. Days later, as we approached the Golden Gate, long before we could see land, Turn could smell it, which heightened his canine frenzy.

But, alas, Turn was not allowed shore leave. He had made himself a pest on T.I. before. It was something involving the Admiral's flower garden and Turn's rakish, seaman's ways with all the little bitch doggies who lived on the island. Yet, keeping Turn To away from the gangplank for 24 hours a day when he was anxious for liberty proved impossible. Then, ashore on the island, we would not see him for several days until he returned, tired, dirty and happy.

The junior Ensign aboard was assigned the collateral duty of officer of the motor whaleboat. That was me for almost a year. We used it for man overboard drills and for ship-to-ship transfers. On the occasion of relieving our sister ship (I think it was the Interceptor, but someone may have to correct me on that) in the late Summer of 1959, I launched my little command at the order of Captain Hoskinson. The seas were choppy, but the boat crew was experienced and we made the traverse easily. We smartly secured the sea painter to our bow on their lee side, then we began to off-load our mail and movies and receive their movies in trade. Large waterproof canvas bags were used to protect the contents. We completed the exchange quickly and cast off to return to the Picket; but as we did, we could hear peculiar noises coming from one of the bags we had received. Puppies! Avast there, mates! I directed the cox'n to go back, and yelled to the deck officer to lay out the painter and send over a line to return a package. Everyone on deck was laughing and waving as their ship increased speed to leave us behind.

Well, their ship had a mascot, too. She had delivered 6 puppies at sea, and they looked a whole lot like Turn To. Now they were ours for the next 5 weeks.



YAGR'S Exhibit

Onboard the Battleship Massachusetts

Fall River, MA



October, 25, 26, 2003, Don Batty (AGR-9), Roland Cote (AGR-10), Jack Floyd (AGR-11, YR-65), Tom Giardina (AGR-3), John Hemminger (AGR-2), Tom Manning (AGR-4), Harry Miller (AGR-11, YR-65) and Al Nannini (AGR-15) reported onboard the Massachusetts for another work weekend.

The main focus of work was on the radar room display, but we also managed to find some time to work on other projects.

In the radar room display we installed the overhead, moved lighting, detailed the 2x4 framing to make them look like I beams and primed the interior bulkheads. Also we put the finish coat of paint on the exterior bulkheads. While all this was going on we made a frame for the painting of the USS Guardian AGR-1 that will be hung in the exhibit.

Since the work week end Roland, John and Harry have gone back to the ship during the week. They worked on cutting and fitting

a steel plate across the face of the exterior overhang, cutting and fitting 4" steel pipe to be used for stanchions and then welding them to the newly installed steel plate and deck. They also started work on the bulwark that will be in front of the radar room by cutting and scribing plywood for the slope and camber of the existing deck and bulkhead. We are now waiting on a few pieces of steel that we had to have fabricated for use in conjunction with the bulwark so we can finish it.

With the holidays coming up, work most likely will grind to a halt. Probably the only things that will be going on will be picking up items that will be needed once work starts again. While no dates are set yet we are planning a work weekend sometime in January. If you would like to volunteer some time, give me a call at (401) 724-7278



Don Batty and Tom Manning cutting stock for picture frame



Jack Floyd moving light fixture



Tom Giardina, Al Nannini, Roland Cote and John Hemminger laying out ceiling panel



Tom Giardina, Roland Cote and Don Batty priming inside of radar room

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

**\$80.00 per person (Dues Paying Member And Spouse/Guest)
\$90.00 Per Person (Non-Dues Paying Member And Spouse/Guest)**

Please Return As Soon As Possible, But No Later Than April 1, 2004

If anyone has special needs, let me know!

Name _____

Name of spouse/guest _____

Ship served on _____ Date on board _____ Rate/Rank _____

Ship served on _____ Date on board _____ Rate/Rank _____

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

**YAGR'S Pre-Reunion Tour
Wednesday May 26, 2004
8:30am to 2:25pm (approx.)**

Cost is 59.00 per person

Names of people going on pre-tour

Reunion Shirts

Only available to those going to the reunion!

The shirt being offered this year is a maroon colored golf-style shirt with a 5-colored YAGR'S logo on the left breast. It will also have Philadelphia, PA 2004 on it. **We will not be selling these shirts at the reunion.**

If you want to order a shirt please make sure that I receive your order before April 1, 2004

S	M	L	XL	QTY.	EACH	SUB-TOTAL
					X \$18.00	= \$ _____
			XXL		X \$22.00	= \$ _____
					TOTAL	= \$ _____

Registration For Reunion

Number Of People Attending _____ X \$ 80.00 = \$ _____ TOTAL ITEM \$ _____

Dues paying members and spouse/guest

Number Of People Attending _____ X \$ 90.00 = \$ _____ TOTAL ITEM \$ _____

Non-dues paying members and spouse/guest

Pre-Reunion Tour

Number Of People Going On Tour _____ X \$ 59.00 = \$ _____ TOTAL ITEM \$ _____

Golf Shirts from above form _____ TOTAL ITEM \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT \$ _____

NAME _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO YAGR'S
RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NO LATER THAN APRIL 1, 2004