

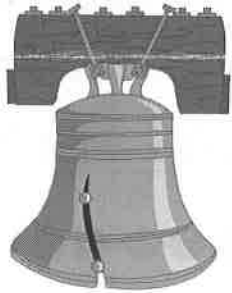


# Radars Picket Ships

## YAGRGRAM #32

### Spring 2004

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



### Reunion 2004

The feedback I have been getting leads me to believe that this is 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 15, 2004** until I have 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 15, 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 need time to have more set aside. If you have any questions, please contact me at (401) 724-7278 or e-mail [yagr@msn.com](mailto:yagr@msn.com)

#### The host hotel for our reunion is 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.

	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](http://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 problem 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.



## 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.

## 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.

## Reunion Registration

Everyone who sent in their reunion registration should have received a confirmation. If you have not received one, please get in touch with me.

## Dates To Remember

I am asking you to get your response to me earlier than usual because I am required by the hotel and tour companies to get a firm count to them by the dates listed.

**March 15, 2004:** Room count to hotel must be modified to reflect numbers signing up for the reunion. Reserve your room today!

**April 10, 2004:** Your reunion registration, pre-reunion tour and reunion shirt form must be received by me.

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.

### Philadelphia weather in May:

Average temperature 62.9°

Average high 73.1°

Average low 52.7°



## SPOUSES/GUESTS

### Breakfast/penny social and hat contest

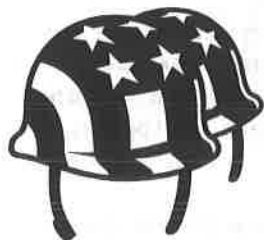
Remember, all spouses/guests are invited to the Saturday morning function. There is no cost to you as it is part of the reunion.



**Breakfast:** We usually start around 9:00am.

We hold this function while the men are holding their meeting.

**Penny Social:** 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, bring mailing labels or your address stamp to be used to put your name on the raffle tickets (no cost for tickets) that you will receive. This will save you a lot of writing.



**Hat contest:** Don't forget to bring your hat so that you can join in on the fun. Your hat should be decorated with the theme of "patriotism."



# Radar Picket Ship

## USS Protector AGR-11

The Protector, the last picket ship afloat, is still sitting in Norfolk, VA awaiting scrapping. But, the Protector is not going without a fight. She is one of 13 ships (called the "ghost fleet") that is part of an English company's contract to break up, and is causing somewhat of an uproar in England and here in the United States.

The article below was taken from the BBS web site.

### Fourth "ghost ship" docking delayed

The last in the current group of former US navy ships due to dock on Teesside is now expected to be brought in on Wednesday. The Compass Island arrived off the coast of north-east England on Friday. It was due to join three other vessels which have already arrived but bad light prevented it from docking at the Able UK yard near Hartlepool and it stayed offshore over the weekend. The ship had then been due to be brought in on Tuesday morning but light and tides were not suitable and the next available opportunity is Wednesday morning.

The first two ships were met by protesters, who said the fleet was an environmental hazard, containing asbestos and other waste material, and should not have been allowed over from America. But protesters have stayed away since, saying they are now waiting for the outcome of legal challenges.

Able UK won a contract to dismantle and recycle 13 vessels from the outdated US fleet, which had been in the James River in Virginia. A judicial review is scheduled for the High Court, in London, in December. It will determine whether the



Photo courtesy of Leslie Buchter, AGR-11, 1958 - 1959

ships can be recycled in Britain or returned to America. The remaining nine vessels which formed Able UK's contract, will stay in Virginia until at least next spring pending legal challenges there. The first two ships to arrive were the Caloosahatchee and the Canisteo. The third was the Canopus.

Able UK boss Peter Stephenson welcomed the arrival of the ships and said he remained confident that the courts would rule that the work should be carried out on Teesside, creating 200 jobs. Mr Stephenson, who believes many people have been misled by campaign groups about the safety of the ships, said: "When people know the truth about these vessels, they will realise there's nothing at all to be worried about. "I am confident that the work will eventually go ahead here and people should actually be proud of the fact that we secured the contract from America."

For more information on the ghost fleet go to

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/tees/3246144.stm>

I was able to locate the names of only 10 of the 13 ships of the "ghost fleet".

USS Caloosahatchee

USS Compass Island

USS Rigel

USS Canisteo

USS Mormacmoon

USS Santa Cruz

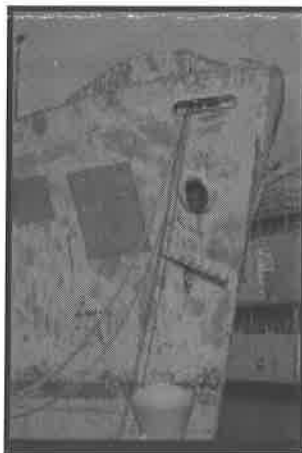
USS Canopus

USS Mormacwave

USS Santa Isabel

and the USS Protector AGR-11

These two pictures of the Protector AGR-11 show her sitting in Norfolk, VA. in June of 1999.



Photo's by Frank Mc Namara (AGR-16), and can be viewed on the Watchman's web page.



Photo courtesy of A. H. Brogan, CO AGR-3, 1961-64

## USS Skywatcher AGR-3

The Skywatcher now has a web page set up on the internet. Bob Rowe has put together a great page for the ship.

With the Skywatcher's page now online, we have 7 web sites that deal with the Radar Picket Ships.

USS Skywatcher AGR-3    USS Interpreter AGR-14

USS Searcher AGR-4    USS Tracer AGR-15

USS Investigator AGR-9    USS Watchman AGR-16

and the YAGR'S page at

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

The YAGR'S page has links to all of the above ships.



## USS Searcher AGR-4

We have received an inquiry about a former Searcher crewman. Mrs. Teryl Kowalski is looking for information about a relative who served on the Searcher, BT2 Daryl W. Bailey.

Mrs. Kowalski does not know when he served. All she had was that he was on the Searcher between 1959 - 1965.

If you have any information on Daryl, please contact

Mrs. Teryl Kowalski

10272 Grand Hickory Dr.

Mechanicsville, VA 23116

**For your information.**  
**Orders for all ship store items, including hats and denim shirts will be taken with the next YAGRGRAM. Remember we will only be ordering hats and shirts twice a year.**

## Wanted For YAGR'S Exhibit.

### Ships Emblems.

We are still trying to locate the following ship emblems:

YAGR 1    YAGR-4    YAGR-11

YAGR-13    YAGR-14

These five emblems are the only ones we do not have on display in our exhibit on the battleship Massachusetts. I don't know for sure even if there were any created for these ships when they were classified as YAGR, but if they were we would like to have them to put on display.

### Cigarette Lighter

We are missing one lighter to complete our collection - the USS Watchman AGR-16. It is a shame that the Watchman is the only ship to not have her lighter on display.

If you have or know where one of these items is, please get in touch with me.



**June 1, 2003 - May 31, 2004**

### YAGR'S Dues

**If you have not paid your dues for the year, please do!**

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 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.

### Moving

Remember when you are moving to send us your new address and phone number. If you have just recently moved and have not done so, please do.

We have lost track of 2 former crewman since the last YAGRGRAM went out because they failed to give us their new address.



### **Robert Pruessner (AGR-3, 1955)**

A copy of a letter sent to my Mom and baby sister (age 13 then) living on a farm (Rural Route 1 Box 403) in New Braunfels, Texas from the Skywatcher YAGR 3. The ship was operating out of Newport, RI to assigned ocean stations a couple of hundred miles off shore. We were to stay within a few miles of the assigned point to radar track incoming airplanes hopefully to identify the enemy planes before they bombed Washington. We stayed on station for six weeks, as I remember, and we managed to convince ourselves that six weeks was a long time to be at sea. The scuttlebutt around the ship was that, with this boring duty and the "extended" time at sea, some of the crew would go crazy. With this background, here is a copy of the letter I sent home.

28Aug 1955

Dear Mom & Sis.

The hurricanes have all gone now. We will be in port by the time the next one is up here. We have only 9 more days to do before our relief shows up.

There was a most humorous incident that happened today. Some of the radarmen with nothing to do in their spare time organized a secret club - - The Bird Watcher's Society. Today was initiation day. The new members were to be the Capt. (John Anto), myself, the Electronic Officer and two new Ensigns. It started off very quiet but with each of the new members to wear odd clothes. The captain was to wear a black rain coat, tennis shoes and a sailor hat. I wore unmatched shoes, shorts, a funny hat, etc.. It was expected that all of this would take place in one compartment and very few of the crew would see us. Part of the initiation (that was added) was standing watch on the main deck as a lookout but not to speak. This is where the humor comes in. (Background, the captain is very friendly but very military, requiring respect from enlisted men etc) He was the first one placed on watch. Being a Sunday afternoon it was very quiet on the ship and he started standing his watch on the after part of the ship. The First Class Metalsmith walked out and saw the Commanding Officer looking around and in a very strange uniform. After the first shock he tried to talk to him and could receive no answer. His first thought, "The Old man is off his rocker." The captain finally said "I'm trying to catch birds," noticing how disturbed the first class was. "Yes Sir, I'll help you get them," said the First Class and ran around trying to humor him. At the first chance, he left him to run to the Chief Hospital Corpsman and the police chief. "The Captain's gone mad and is out on the main deck aft." They, in the line of duty and not knowing what was going on, couldn't help but believe him and placed the Captain under arrest. They then took him to the Officer of the Deck, who knew what was happening, and when asked what to do, he said take him to sick bay and examine him. It then became involved and he explained the story to them (his captors) and was released. The three persons involved were quite embarrassed to say the least and the Captain thought the whole thing very funny, so all's well that ends well.

Looking forward to the drive home and being home

Your Son  
Bobby





# YAGR'S Exhibit

## Onboard the Battleship Massachusetts

### Fall River, MA



### Work on the Massachusetts.

January 16, 17, 18, 2004

We had 4 brave or maybe fool hardy souls show up for this weekend. With temperatures at 9° below zero and wind chills of 45° below zero they braved the elements to work on the ship.

With only 4 men, Roland Cote (AGR-10), Jack Floyd (AGR-11, YR-65), Tom Giardina (AGR-3) and Harry Miller (AGR-11, YR-65) we still managed to accomplish a few items. First off we built a console desk that will be going into the radar room. This desk will be used in conjunction with the radar scope that we have on site. Secondly we took apart a radar plotting board that the curator of the Destroyer Kennedy had given us because the display part of the board was not of the type that was in use on our ships. Also we have to replace the switches and rewire the lights that are used to light up the board. Jack has taken this job. Also we will have to go out and buy another piece of plexi-glass so that we can draw on the correct plotting configuration.

As a foot note in regards to the work weekend, due to the frigid temperatures the battleship had to close off the forward part of the ship, including our exhibit. So due to necessity we made arrangements to work in the ship's carpenter shop. We are told the ship is still trying to figure out a way to expand the heating system to get heat to the forward compartments.



Harry cutting stock to size, Roland and Jack in the background.



Tom, Roland and Jack fabricating console.



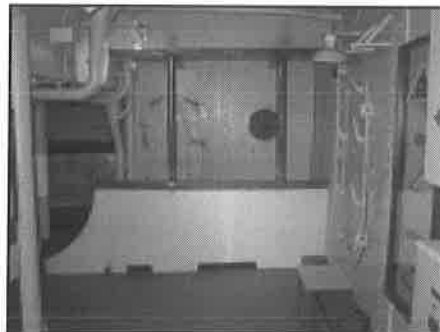
Roland and Tom looking over completed console.

Roland Cote, John Hemminger (AGR-2) and Harry Miller have since gone back to the ship to build and erect the bulwark that is set up in front of the radar room.

The radar room display will consist of a small mockup of a radar room but by no means will show the actual room that was on the picket ships. To make this display a little more unique, we are setting it up as if the room were located on the main deck of a ship. To accomplish this, we have built a 12' section of bulwark and a 12' section of wood deck (not installed at this time) that will be behind the bulwark. This, along with the water tight door and porthole along with the structural detailing we have done to date, will create the illusion of a ship's main deck. We are hoping that this will give the visitors to the battleship a surprise when they walk into our exhibit (which is on the second deck) and see what looks like a ship's main deck. So far I believe we have, as the comments we have received from the battleship's staff have been very positive.



Picture shown here is what the area of the radar room looked like before we started work.



Picture of same area with radar room and bulwark erected.



Angle shot of radar room and bulwark.

**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 10, 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.

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**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 10, 2004

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

### 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 CHECK PAYABLE TO YAGR'S  
RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NO LATER THAN APRIL 10, 2004**