



# Radar Picket Ships

## YAGRGRAM #33

### Summer 2004

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## The Philadelphia Reunion

### May 27, 28, 29, 2004



Souvenir pin that was given to crewmen at this year's reunion.

### The best one yet?

With 144 crewmen and 117 spouses/guests (261 total), we converged on Philadelphia, PA for the 9th YAGR'S reunion. 144 former crewmen represented all 16 ships and one YR, YR-65.

From all accounts this was one of the best or, some would say, the best reunion to date. Our host hotel could not have been any better, the pre-reunion tour on Wednesday (103 people) to the Battleship New Jersey along with a luncheon cruise along the Delaware river, and our group tour Friday to the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall in downtown Philly went on without a hitch.

The weather on the days of the tours was a concern, but it did not hamper any of our activities.

Our hospitality room served as a gathering place for swapping sea stories or a convenient place to meet before going out to explore the many sights of Philadelphia. It was also the place to sit around and relax with your friends or as a place to meet new ones. There was always someone new to meet.

At our Saturday morning crew's meeting, along with the various reports we held a drawing to cover the cost of the hotel room for the 3 nights of the reunion. We sold tickets during the reunion for \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00. Bob Campbell (AGR-12) was the last person to buy a ticket, so he was asked to draw the winning ticket. The winner was Gerry Dietz (AGR-4). The raffle brought in \$1,330.00 which will be used for our exhibit on the Battleship Massachusetts.

The spouses/guests Saturday morning breakfast/penny social and hat contest was a great hit as usual. From what I understand there were quite a few tables of items that were brought in by the spouses/guests. The hat contest that was held was won by Eileen Murray (AGR-9, AGR-12).

The Saturday night banquet was also a success. Along with good company, good food and a great DJ, all had a good time. In fact we had to ask the DJ to extend the contracted hours so that the dancers in the group could dance a little longer.



Boarding the boat for the luncheon cruise.



YAGRMEN along with their spouses/guests listen to a guide on the Battleship New Jersey as he talks about the 16" guns.



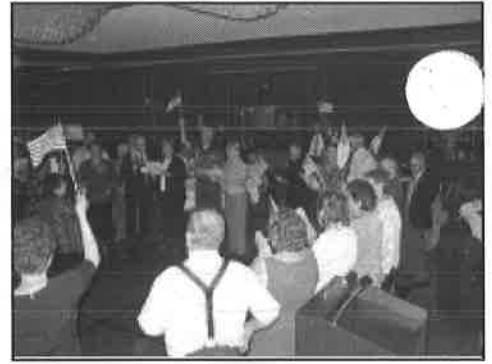
A couple of the tables in our hospitality room.



Mens meeting, 137 in attendance.



One of the 25 tables at our Saturday night banquet.



Waving the red, white and blue during the Saturday night banquet.



### Well Done!

A BZ (well done) to Tom and Dee Yerger (AGR-8, 1956-58) for their help at this year's reunion.

# Spouses/Guests

One hundred and eleven spouses/guests took advantage of the breakfast, penny social and hat contest that was held Saturday morning. The breakfast was great, the penny social is growing every year and the hat contest was one of the best to date.

As all of the spouses/guests are learning, it is more fun to come to the breakfast than to sit in their rooms waiting for the mens meeting to end. And as one person put it, "I didn't know what I was missing" by not coming.

It seems that every year it is growing. This year we had to have five tables to hold all the penny social items, and it seems that every year the gifts get better.

Eileen Murray (AGR-9, AGR-12) won this year's hat contest. The theme for the contest was "patriotism." The hat Eileen decorated sure did show it.

In the next YAGRGRAM we will have information in regard to what we will doing for the San Francisco reunion.

## The Top Hat

Eileen Murray



Photo by Sue Mowen, (AGR-11)

A couple of other contestants



Photo by Yvonne Cote, (AGR-10)



Photo by Yvonne Cote (AGR-10)



# YAGR'S 10th Reunion

## May 19, 20, 21, 2005

Our 10th reunion will be held in San Francisco, CA (San Mateo). The days and dates are  
 Thursday May 19, 2005  
 Friday May 20, 2005  
 Saturday May 21, 2005

Our host hotel will be the:

Marriott San Mateo  
 1770 South Amphlett Boulevard  
 San Mateo, CA 94402

To make your room reservations, call  
 1-800-556-8972

**Make sure you tell them that you are with YAGR'S military reunion group.**

Our group rate is \$79.00 a night for a ngle/double room.

The Marriott is all set up for receiving room reservations for YAGR'S at this time. We ask that you reserve your room as soon as possible. Doing so will enable us to arrange for more rooms to be set aside for YAGR'S, if needed.

**You can view the hotel on their web site at <http://www.sanmateomarriott.com/>**

The San Mateo Marriott has 476 guestrooms and plenty of space for our hospitality room and banquet room, so once again we will not have to worry about any space limitations. Parking is free for overnight guests. The hotel has a free shuttle from the San Francisco Airport to the hotel. We will also be able to utilize the hotels free shuttle to take us to nearby locations of the hotel and also to connect us with BART, which will get us into San Francisco.

For our early arrivals we hope to have a pre-reunion hospitality room set up. More information will follow as it becomes available. Also as per our previous 9 reunions, we will be setting up a pre-reunion tour on the 18th of May. At this time we are also trying to set up a post-reunion tour (Sunday May 22, 2005) onboard the SS Jeremiah O'Brien which will be getting under way on Sunday in conjunction with the reunion day.

### Marriott SAN MATEO SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT



#### YAGR'S REUNION May 19, 20, 21, 2005

#### Directions

From San Francisco International Airport:  
 Take Highway 101 South to Highway 92  
 West. Exit at Delaware Street; turn right  
 on Concar Drive which merges into  
 S. Amphlett Boulevard. Hotel is on the left.



#### Location

- Just 8 miles south of San Francisco International Airport
- Centrally located between San Francisco and San Jose
- Convenient to businesses including Intel, Oracle, Sun Microsystems, Applied Microsystems and Silicon Valley companies

#### Meeting Facilities & Services

- 10 meeting rooms with 24,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space including a Grand Ballroom for up to 700
- 11,000 square feet of dramatic outdoor event space including a decorative Italian Wedding Gazebo, Poolside Courtyard and Paver Deck
- Inspired food and beverage and theme events indoors or alfresco



#### Recreation and Leisure

- Outdoor pool and spa
- Exercise facility
- 20 minutes to Downtown San Francisco attractions
- 49ers Stadium at Candlestick Park
- Bay Meadows Racetrack
- Half Moon Bay
- Paramount's Great America theme park
- Hillsdale and Stanford shopping malls

#### Guest Services

- All meeting rooms and public spaces completely wired for easy plug and play high speed Internet with 24-hour on-site technical assistance available
- Complimentary transportation to SFO
- Valet and overnight parking
- Business center
- Over 90% non-smoking rooms
- Safe-deposit boxes



#### Accommodations

- Guestrooms and suites are designed with all the amenities of a world-class Marriott Hotel, all the furnishings needed by today's sophisticated traveler and all the comforts of home.
- 27" TVs with complimentary cable and HBO
  - Complimentary USA Today and San Mateo County Times
  - Reclining chairs
  - In-room pay-per-view movies, games and high-speed Internet access
  - Two-line telephones with voice mail, speaker and data port
  - Complimentary coffee in all rooms
  - Refrigerators and microwaves in some suites
  - Hairdryers and shower massager

#### Restaurants & Lounge

- *California Grill*, for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- *The Marketplace*, an espresso bar and cafe featuring Starbucks coffee



## Dues

June 1, 2004 - May 31, 2005

**Dues are now due for YAGR'S. Our year for dues purposes runs from June 1, 2004 to May 31, 2005.** 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.

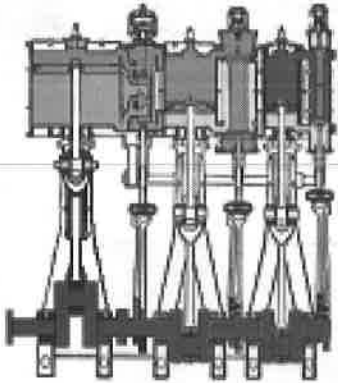
If you have paid your dues and there is not a date on the label or you have not received your membership card and your updated list of former crewmen from your ship/ships, please get in touch with me.

Dues are \$17.00 the first time you pay them and \$15.00 every year after.

Make checks payable to YAGR'S

## Crewmen Located

We have now located 1,914 former crewmen.



Triple Expansion Engine.

## e-mail messages.

In the past few YAGRGRAM's I have asked everyone who sends me an e-mail to put something in the subject area that indicates it is coming from someone associated with YAGR'S.

Some have not and the e-mail has been deleted because I did not know who it came from and it has caused a few problems. I do not know everyone's e-mail address by memory so it is important to have something I can recognize as coming from a member.

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

## Why every YAGRGRAM?

I have been asked why certain items are in the YAGRGRAM every time it is sent out.

There are certain things that have to be published in the YAGRGRAM each time it is sent out; such as request to pay dues, new address updates, etc. This is necessary due to the fact that we are always adding new members to our mailing list, and with them receiving their YAGRGRAM for the first time it is important that these notices be in the YAGRGRAM they receive.



## 50 Years

2005 marks fifty years since the first radar picket ship, the USS Guardian YAGR-1, was commissioned. Also in 1955 the USS Lookout YAGR-2, USS Skywatcher YAGR-3 and USS Searcher YAGR-4 were placed in commission. (You all know the YAGR was changed to AGR in 1958).

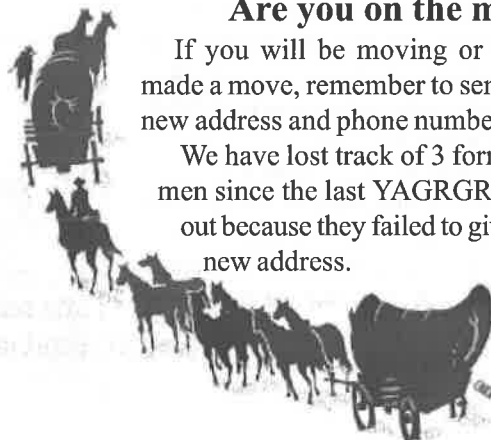
To mark the occasion, we are planning to make our tenth reunion in San Francisco something special. As mentioned earlier we are hoping to set up a post-reunion tour on the SS Jeremiah O'Brien when she gets underway on Sunday the 22nd of May. In preliminary talks with the O'Brien, we are hoping to set up some type of memorial service for our departed crewmen and I am sure we will have something special for those attending the reunion. The O'Brien ties up in San Francisco at Fisherman's wharf, pier 45.

We will be in close contact with the O'Brien in setting up what we hope will be an unforgettable reunion experience. A note in regards to the O'Brien: Tom Patterson, a former Commanding Officer of the Guardian (1954-56), is the Chairman and CEO of the National Liberty Ship Memorial which owns the O'Brien.

## Are you on the move?

If you will be moving or have just made a move, remember to send us your new address and phone number.

We have lost track of 3 former crewmen since the last YAGRGRAM went out because they failed to give us their new address.





## U.S.S. GUARDIAN (AGR-1)

### *LIBERTY SHIP: SS JAMES G. SQUIRES*

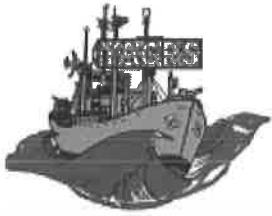
BUILT BY:	J.A. JONES CONSTRUCTION CO., PANAMA CITY, FL
KEEL LAID:	20 MARCH 1945 (HULL #3137)
LAUNCHED:	08 MAY 1945
SPONSORED BY:	MRS. ELLSA BROOME
PLACED IN SERVICE:	31 MAY 1945
PLACED IN RESERVE FLEET:	05 OCTOBER 1945



### *U.S.S. GUARDIAN (AGR-1)*

CONVERTED:	03 JUNE 1954 AT CHARLESTON, SC
COMMISSIONED:	01 FEBRUARY 1955 AS YAGR-1 AT NORFOLK, VA
HOMEPORT:	02 JUNE 1955 AT NEWPORT, RI 01 OCTOBER 1957 AT DAVISVILLE, RI
RECLASSIFIED:	28 SEPTEMBER 1958 AS AGR-1
DECOMMISSIONED:	28 JULY 1965
DISPOSITION:	21 NOVEMBER 1970 SOLD AS SCRAP

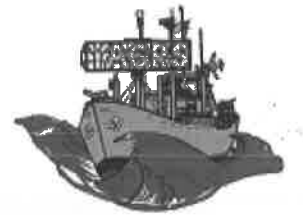
Guardian was the first Radar Picket Ship put into service by the US Navy. She was equipped with highly sensitive radar gear to enable her to detect, track and report any aircraft penetrating the continental United States.



# YAGR'S Exhibit

## Onboard the Battleship Massachusetts

Fall River, MA



### New display installed

A new display was recently installed in our exhibit. This display gives information about the WWII Liberty ships, both the standard design and the Boxed Aircraft Liberty which was derived from the standard design of liberty ship.

The top portion of the display covers the informational part along with WWII pictures taken from war posters. The bottom portion has two models of Liberty ships, one being the standard design and the other a Boxed Aircraft Liberty ship. A note in regard to the Boxed Aircraft model: it is most likely the

only model of a Liberty Ship in this configuration on display. As we all know there were only 38 built so there is not much interest on anyone's part to have built a model of one.

The models are mounted on copper sheeting and the back of the display area has a mirror so that the back side of the models may be seen.

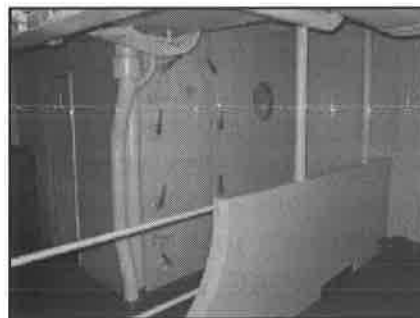
One item that still has to be done for the display is to install another light to brighten the right side of the display. This will be done in the very near future.



Roland Cote (AGR-10) working on display



Exterior of radar room before porthole was installed and painting done.



Radar room with porthole, painted and bulwark and hand rails installed.



Picture taken at different angle of bulwark. Note chock welded to deck in the lower left corner of picture.

Work to complete the radar room will be ongoing in the next few months. This work will include finishing the wood deck in front on the radar room. This will finish the outside of the display. The interior work that has to be done includes lighting and installing the radar plotting board, painting a section of bulkhead black, installing the radar scope along with a console next to it, detailing the interior of the space to mimi working radar room and adding lighting.



## **John Wrafter (AGR-1, 1957-58)**

### **What Did They See?**

"They joined the Navy to see the world;" but other than the Boston Shipyard, the men of the Guardian saw only one "foreign" port in 1958. Guardian and a Coast Guard Cutter were asked to visit Portland, Maine, to conduct an Open House of the ships and to each provide a group to march in the Memorial Day parade. The officers and men in their dress uniforms manned the Guardian's rail as she moved into her designated spot on the pier behind the cutter. It was an impressive sight. Guardian almost resembled a man-o-war except that she didn't render a gun salute. She couldn't because she didn't have a saluting battery. To prepare for the parade, Guardian's deck crew had made several "U.S.S. Guardian" banners and pennants. It was reported that the Guardian contingent performed admirably in the parade.

### **Mistaken Identity**

Before leaving Davisville, RI. for Portland, a new recruit, Seaman Holmes, had reported for duty. He seemed to be shorter than what the Navy would have allowed and he had a babyface to go along with his short stature. During Guardian's stay in Portland a couple of events involving Seaman Holmes occurred.

On one of the days a group of about 30 or 40 Sea Scouts, dressed in uniforms almost identical to what the crew was wearing, was touring the ship. Ens. Max Privette, the OOD, spotted a small figure climbing high up on Guardian's mast. Thinking that it was one of the sea scouts and fearing an

injury, Ens. Privette shouted "You up there, come down at once." The figure slowly descended and he was quickly identified as Seaman Holmes.

### **Neither Rain nor Sleet nor Foe Will Stay This Courier from His Appointed Task**

LTJG Wrafter was OOD when a call was received that one bag of mail was received for Guardian and it was available at the end of the dock. The petty officer passed the word for the Deck Dept. to have one of its men report to the quarterdeck. Within a minute or two, Seaman Holmes dutifully reported. In a twisted version of the old "Hang this pail on the skyhook" gambit, Mr. Wrafter ordered Holmes "Go to the end of the dock, and pick up the two bags of mail for Guardian." About five minutes later, Holmes returned bearing, as was to be expected, the one bag of mail. Mr. Wrafter asked "Where is the other bag of mail?" Holmes replied, "There was only one bag of mail, sir." Mr. Wrafter replied, rather sternly "I said there were two bags. Now, go back down there and get the other bag." Holmes protested "But sir" as he began his walk back down to the end of the dock.

About 15 minutes later, a lone slight figure could be seen trudging up the dock toward Guardian with what appeared to be a mailbag. Upon delivering the bag to the quarterdeck, Holmes reported "Here's the other bag, sir." It turned out the bag was addressed to the Coast Guard Cutter.



## **Joe L. Jackson (AGR-14, 1964-65)**

One day while the Interpreter was in port, the steam line from the pier to the ship broke. A BM1, rather than going down the brow to the pier, jumped from the ship to the pier. The tide was low. In doing so, he missed his intended landing spot, thereby hitting the bollard on the pier with both legs. He was taken from the pier to the base hospital where it was determined that nothing was broken, but that he should stay off his feet for a few days. The XO determined that he should do this at home and detailed a

driver and an Ensign that had the duty to take the BM1 home.

Upon arriving at his house, the Ensign knocked on the door and when the BM1's wife opened the door he told her that her husband was in the car. Before he could finish, she explained, "You take that drunken son of a %&##\* back to the ship." The Ensign explained that he was not drunk but that he had been hurt. Her attitude changed immediately, and she helped unload him, loving on him the whole way.





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

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.

Two new pins, RADRON ONE and RADRON TWO



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



ITEM	EACH		QUANTITY		SUB TOTAL
HAT HULL # _____	\$19.00	X		=	
DENIM SHIRT HULL # _____	S, M, L, XL \$33.00	X		=	
SIZE _____					
SIZE _____	XXL \$35.00	X		=	
HAT/LAPEL PINS \$4.50 EACH OR ANY TWO FOR \$8.00					
YAGR'S LOGO HAT/LAPEL PIN		X		=	
RADRON ONE		X		=	
RADRON TWO		X		=	
SKYWATCHER AGR-3		X		=	
LOCATOR YAGR-6		X		=	
PROTECTOR AGR-11		X		=	
TRACER AGR-15		X		=	
RADAR PICKET SHIP PIN 1-1/2" LONG		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 _____					

Note: All orders must reach me by July 30, 2004. This is when orders placed with our suppliers. It can take up to six weeks after that for you to receive your order.