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YAGRGRAM #91 - WINTER 2023/24

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view & print this YAGRGRAM in color at <http://www.yagrs.org>

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YAGR'S 27th AND FINAL REUNION INFORMATION

At last year's business meeting (DC 2023) it was decided to make the YAGR 27th reunion (2024) the final reunion, and to decommission the organization as per the bylaws. The minutes from last year's business meeting, included in this YAGRGRAM, discusses this decision in detail. Following is the hotel and registration info for this final YAGR reunion.

YAGRS - 2024 REUNION LOCATION & HOTEL INFO - Lee Doyel

The Crown Plaza Hotel in Warwick, RI was the best choice for a hotel for a military reunion. It is very friendly to the military and it's contracts have all the pertinent concessions (ie free parking, no room attrition, own alcohol & snacks, free hospitality room, etc). The hotel had weekday space available in September 2024. No Friday or Saturday. Therefore I selected Monday, September 16 through Thursday, September 19, 2024 for our final reunion. This was the best that could be obtained. Details follow.

Crowne Plaza Hotel

801 Greenwich Ave

Warwick, RI 02886

401-732-6000

Room rate is \$149.00 plus 13% room tax which makes it \$168.37.

Good 3 days pre & post reunion dates solely based on availability. So sign up early.

The cut off date for the block of rooms is Friday, August 16, 2024.

Use group code YAR when registering.

May cancel 24 hrs prior without penalty.

When registering with the hotel (401-732-6000) you will be answered by a phone tree. Punch 1 for reservations.

According to the front desk, after answering a few questions a live person will come online to complete the registration. I found this out as I bypassed the phone tree by punching 0 and talked to the front desk which took my reservation. He asked that we use the phone tree if possible due to staffing problems and front desk responsibilities.

Use the front desk if you have problems. Use group code YAR. Late at night and very early morning hours, the front desk should be available.

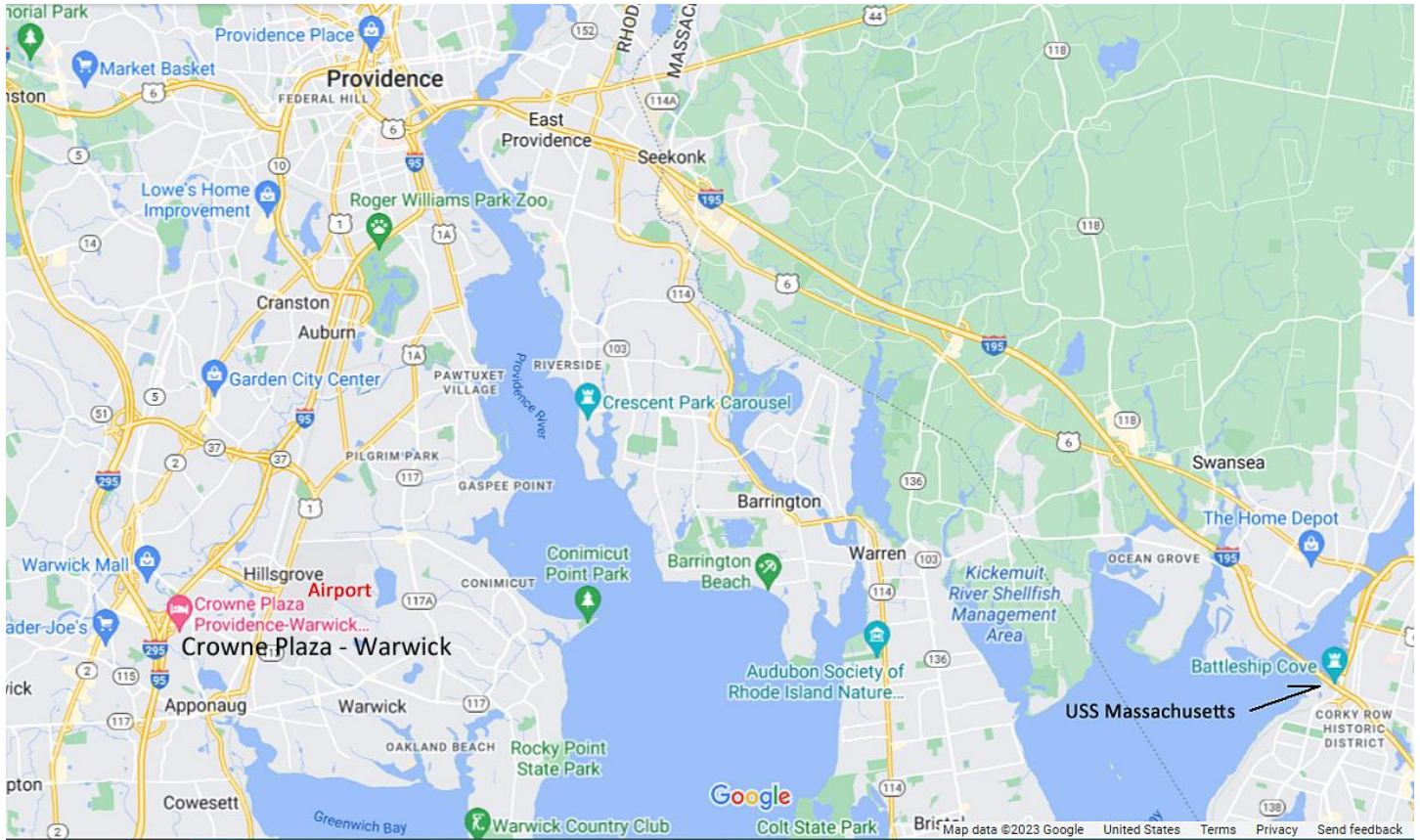
Use the front desk if you have problems. Use group code YAR. Late at night and very early morning hours, the front desk should be available.

Mon, check in.

Tue & Wed tours.

Thursday, decommissioning ceremony around noon on the battleship & banquet/dance Thursday night.





2023 DC BUSINESS MEETING - Lee Doyel

There were only 19 YAGR crew members there with 27 guests. This was the lowest turnout yet. Last year in Nashville there were 44 crew members and 42 in Colorado Springs. The Marlin Mariners also attended. Their participation was down too and possibly their last or next to last reunion as they had less than we did. Five ships have no Ship's Coordinators. Lee handles those duties himself.

Mel Harder, Secretary, reported there are 239 YAGR members which is down from 1,200 in the early days. He updates the individual ships lists annually which he sends out. Therefore a mail copy may not be currently accurate. He can email a current list if requested.

Ray Ostrowski made a Treasures report basically stating that the Association is in good financial shape with about \$25,000 in spendable funds.

Roland Cote reported that the museum is in good shape. However there was some slight water damage in the Pea Coat locker due to a rusted drain. Items were taken out and the ship repaired the drain. The museum deck has peeling paint on the deck. The ship wants to paint the deck red (red lead actually) to match the other exhibits deck color. Lee gave them permission to do so.

Frank Pulaski reported the web site counter (installed 2 yrs ago) has had over 10,000 hits which keeps us at the top of the list when someone inquires about liberty ships, radar picket ships, etc. However few messages have been left recently on the site. Far fewer than in past years. As always, the latest reunion will be documented with info and pictures after the event. Susanne Attig graciously took numerous pictures of everything this year which will be posted on the web site. The web site has plenty of room so anyone desiring to send sea stories, pictures of ship activities, etc is encourage to do so.

Lee has 3 YAGRS book left.

The ships store current inventory is on the web site but few sales have been made this past year. Lee had a real nice metal YAGR license plate tag made for the reunion and included one in each registration packet. He plans to have the excess (25 plates) listed on the inventory.

There was a discussion about the future. Clearly there is little reason to believe that the Association can gather large numbers for a reunion again. Small numbers make getting hotels and tours more difficult and expensive. Following discussion, it was agreed that one final meeting (as per bylaws) be on the USS Massachusetts, in Fall River, MA for the purpose of decommissioning the Association as the only viable option. The bylaws also state that the remaining funds must go to the USS Massachusetts for the purpose of maintaining the YAGR exhibit. As to the future, matters such as the continuation of the web site, newsletter and other communications will have to be finalized by or at the final business meeting.

As to the Washington reunion, this was our finest hour. Full credit goes to Lee and Brian Forrester for the arrangements. The Hyatt Regency was excellent. The tours were excellent and included front row seat for viewing the DC fireworks on July 4th on the 14th floor at the Hilton Doubletree, a tour of Mount Vernon, a tour of Washington which included the Navy Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, VietNam Memorial and the Korean War Memorial. On Friday evening we had front row seats at the Marine Barracks tattoo. I have to give it to them, the Marines did themselves proud!

Memo from Lee Doye!

An association member died earlier this year and in his will he left some monies to the Association. It was a fair amount. Therefore in consultation with Mel Harder and Ray Ostrowski it was decided to use the money to subsidize the reunion by reducing the cost of the tours, food, ceremonies, etc. At this time I am not disposed to disclose the amount of the money or the name of the individual. That will be provided later. Also the tours may reach a capacity limit depending on how many sign up. The decision as to who goes on a tour and who does not will be decided by using the date of receipt of the registration form. So register early.

At the business meeting it was decided to keep \$5,000 in the bank account for contingency purposes. However it has been brought to my attention and other considerations about the matter. This means the Association will still legally exist, which means we are liable for any unforeseen circumstances as well as tax considerations and people and organizations sending money and items to us. Unfortunately, all things considered, this means we need to dissolve completely. We will have a short business meeting at the reunion to accomplish this. Also Mel has said that he will no longer be able to do the YAGRGRAM either electronically or hard mail copies after this final reunion. I know it is hard to give up and at the business meeting it was evident efforts were present to "hang on." I totally understand that. However I think total dissolution is the best route, no matter how painful."

USS Massachusetts

From: ROLAND R COTE <vonnie448@comcast.net>

Subject: 2023 donation

Date: July 28, 2023

On 19 July 2023 a donation check from the YAGR Association was presented to USS. Battleship Massachusetts Executive Director Meghan Rathbun by Roland Cote AGR-10.



ship's coordinators : Lee Doyel

Ship's coordinators maintain an email list that is used to forward memos from the chair and advance notices of reunion plans to crew members. If you wish to be included, send an email to your ship's coordinator. Due to various circumstances, I now need coordinators for AGR-1, 6, 7 & 9. I can supply group lists to anyone who takes one of these ships. Duties are not extensive. Primarily forwarding what I put out to the ship's email list.

- AGR-1
- AGR-2 Ralph Rappuhun rrappuhn@aol.com
- AGR-3 Chuck Parker chuckparker@gmail.com
- AGR-4 Steve Mierzejewsk stevejackie43@gmail.com
- AGR-5 Bob Werstler rdwerst@sbcglobal.net
- AGR-6
- AGR-7
- AGR-8 Ken Helmick korneb@yahoo.com

- AGR-9
- AGR-10 Paul Langenus plangenus@cox.net
- AGR-11 George Sleeper gsleeper@roadrunner.com
- AGR-12 Jesse Germany jgermany31@gmail.com
- AGR-13 Richard Willhite willys55nut@comcast.net
- AGR-14 Howard Oberstein howardoberstein@sbcglobal.net
- AGR-15 Lee Doyel mldoyel@cox.net
- AGR-16 Frank McNamara ec2sc1@comcast.net

Dues Payment Form - dues are \$17/year

Make checks out to YAGRS. Mail to:

Ray Ostrowski, Treasurer

123 Barbara Dr., Newburgh NY 12550

Ray can also be reached at: e-mail: rayrosie@hotmail.com

phone: 845-565-6243 cell: 845-245-5707

Current membership year ends May 31, 2024. Highlighted date on address label is the date your current membership expires. If that date is **5/31/2023** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive an updated membership card and crew list. Please complete the information below and mail to Ray Ostrowski with dues payment.

Name: _____ Ship: _____

Address: _____

amount enclosed: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____



Harry Miller - founder of YAGR'S Association
YAGR'S 8th Reunion - 2003
Pensacola Florida

photo by Mel Harder

YAGRS ASSOCIATION



**Sixteen Ships That Served As Radar Picket Ships During The Cold War
1955 to 1965**

There were 8 ships on the West Coast and 8 ships on the East Coast that served as the seaward extension of the Distant Early Warning System (DEW line) of Canada and the United States. Patrols ranged from 25 to 45 days, and the ships were controlled by and reported to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD). The ships were equipped with the very latest electronic and radar equipment. They were converted World War II Liberty cargo ships. Although the patrols were long and boring, the ships, with all that room, had above average living conditions for Navy ships. In addition to the detection duties, the ships performed navigation assistance to commercial aircraft as well as scientific sea and fishing research. The ships were a stopgap measure until over-the-horizon radar and satellite capabilities could be developed. They were "on the point" and would have been the first to know about hostilities from the Soviet Union. They served with honor, and the East Coast ships performed a vital function in the Cuban missile crises of October 1962.

REGISTRATION FORM - YAGR'S 27th & FINAL REUNION

WARWICK RI - MON. SEPT. 16 - THURS. SEPT. 19 2024

BANQUET, HOSPITALITY ROOM AND TOURS RESERVATION FORM
 THIS FORM WILL NOT TAKE CARE OF YOUR HOTEL YOU MUST CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY

Please return completed registration form ASAP but no later than August 15, 2024. Mail to our treasurer Ray Ostrowski, 123 Barbara Dr., Newburgh, NY 12550. Print your name exactly as you want it to appear on your name tag. Make checks payable to YAGRS Association. Also, indicate your choice of beef, chicken or fish for the Thursday evening banquet. Hotel checkout is Friday

NAME _____ BANQUET MEAL _____
 SPOUSE/GUEST _____ BANQUET MEAL _____
 ADDITIONAL GUEST(s) _____ BANQUET MEAL _____
 SHIP _____ CONTACT PHONE # _____

REGISTRATION	PRICE PER PERSON	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	TOTAL
Hospitality Room 10:00 a.m. Mon. 9/16 includes Thurs. eve. meal for hotel guests	\$50.00	X	\$

note: Thurs. eve meal
for guests not staying
at the hotel

\$20.00

X

\$

DATES/TIMES	TOURS	COST PER PERSON	NUMBER OF TICKETS	TOTAL
Tues. 9/17 10 am - 6 pm	Rhode Island River Valley Tour (no lunch)	\$25.00	X	\$
Wed. 9/18 9 am - 2 pm	Newport Yatch Sail & Lunch at Sweet Berry Farm	\$50.00	X	\$
Thurs. 9/19 10:30am-3:30pm	Decomissioning Ceremony w/lunch aboard USS Massachusetts	\$0	X	\$

Total amount for registration and tours	\$
Total amount payable to: YAGRS ASSOCIATION	\$

staying in hotel yes no
 sharing room yes no
 if yes with whom
 use a walker yes no
 use a wheelchair yes no
 powered chair yes no
 hotel room confirmation #
 email address
 special dietary needs

note:

If you will not be staying at the reunion hotel, please fill out and return a registration form as we need to know how many will be attending, including the number attending the luncheon onboard the *Massachusetts*.

Details on the two tours can be found at *Experience Rhode Island Tours*.

Non hotel attendee fees are listed above.

THE CUTOFF DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS AUGUST 15, 2024



OCEAN GOING RADAR PICKET SHIPS DISTANT EARLY WARNING NETWORK - NORAD 1955-1965



USS GUARDIAN AGR-1
Erv Thomure



USS LOOKOUT AGR-2

www.yagrs.org



USS SKYWATCHER AGR-3



USS SEARCHER AGR-4



USS SCANNER AGR-5



USS LOCATOR AGR-6
Lee Callahan



USS PICKET AGR-7



USS INTERCEPTOR AGR-8
Gene Hildreth



USS INVESTIGATOR AGR-9



USS OUTPOST AGR-10



USS PROTECTOR AGR-11



Tom Ellsworth and YAGR'S
USS Vigil (AGR-12) Coming along side the USS Protector (AGR-11)



USS INTERDICTOR AGR-13



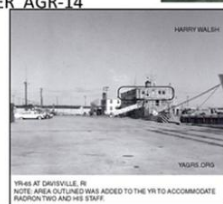
USS INTERPRETER AGR-14



USS TRACER AGR-15



USS WATCHMAN AGR-16



HARRY WALSH
YAGR'S ONE
NAME AT GREENVILLE, RI
NOTE: AREA OUTLINED WAS ADDED TO THE YR TO ACCOMMODATE
PICKET TWO AND HIS STAFF.

