A Sailors first ship

It was the first of its kind -- not quite building, not quite a ship. USS Recruit (TDE-1 and TFFG-1) the Navy's first non-ship, was originally a commissioned vessel and observed traditional Naval shipboard procedures like all other vessels. Any Sailor who ever served duty on board this haze gray ship awash in concrete, fondly remembers his first 'request permission to come aboard.

Affectionately known as USS Neversail, the Recruit was a two-thirds scale mock-up and served as a Sea Daddy to new recruits. When completed in 1949, it was 225 long, had a 24-foot, four inch beam and a 41-foot mast.

During construction, Sailors in NTC's seamanship division supervised the rigging with standard Navy fittings obtained from salvage and mothballed ships. The Recruit was commissioned Rear Adm. Wilder D. Baker, commandant, Eleventh Naval District, on July 27, 1949. A commission pennant was broken and the ensign and Union Jack was hoisted.

It served as a school for all recruits going through basic seamanship indoctrination. The ship's deck was an exact replica of what a Sailor could expect in the fleet. The Recruit had cleats, chocks and mooring lines and operated as any standard Navy ship. Sailors learned marline-spike seamanship, ground tackle operation, cargo booms, deck fittings, lift boat handling and signal equipment.

Besides the regular classrooms, a company of recruits would stay on board from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. each night to polish watchstanding skills.

The recruit went into "drydock" for three months in 1954 for an overhaul and minor repairs. For almost 18 years, the Recruit served the Navy, but in 1967, something unusual happened: automation got the better hand. Technology is supposed to advance one's life, but in this case, it marked the end of the Recruit's commission.

Navy civilian employees making a, card-index inventory of vessels in the San Diego area, found themselves baffled by one particular card, which, when placed through the computer for classification, was continually rejected.

The computer determined that the ship was neither afloat nor tied up ashore. It was not in drydock, not undergoing repairs or rehauling, not in 'mothball' and was crewless! The ship had no boilers, engines or screws and when they discovered the computer could not classify USS Recruit as a commissioned vessel, it was decommissioned on March 7, 1967.

In 1982, the Recruit was old and weathered. Repairs took place to transform the ship from a training destroyer escort into a training guided missile frigate. The new ship had a wooden anchor and was armed with three-inch wooden guns and, a wooden depth charge launcher. The classrooms were modernized and enlarged now accommodating up to 80 Recruits for training.

By 1996, the ship's fate was still undetermined. It was spared from demolition and some plans call for it to be turned into a maritime museum. Only the future will determine USS Recruit's Fate.

Note: When I was there two years ago a tour guide told me it would definitely not be destroyed.

John

See Recruit on Page 4
Departed Shipmates

Due to the limited space in the newsletter this month, we are not publishing a full list of deceased shipmates. The complete list will be published in the July newsletter. We have been notified of the following shipmates that have passed since the last printing.

Anthony, Lloyd
Breedlove, James E.
Crider, Walter
Fox, James Arthur

Following are obituaries we have received regarding the recent passing of shipmates.

RONALD F. LONG
(FA—1956-1960)

Ronald Frederick Long, 69, of Carleton died Wednesday, February 25, 2008, at Heritage Hospital, Taylor, Michigan.

He was born April 5, 1938 in Detroit, Michigan to Charles and Florence Long. He married Lethel A. Laura December 30, 1975 in Trenton, Michigan.

Ronald worked in the construction business for Laborers Union Local #334 and retired in 1991. He served in the US Navy from 1956 to 1960 on the USS Whetstone. He enjoyed fishing, boating, motorcycling and “Gabbing.”

He is survived by his wife, Lethel, 2 daughters, Teri Johnson and Wendy Doney, both of Carleton. Grandchildren, Brad Daniels, Jimmy Thompson and Linsey Long and a great grandchild, Ashya Daniels, along with a sister, Janet Krust, niece, Kelly Barker and nephew, Michael Krust, 3 great-nephews, Mitchell, Logan and John Krust and 1 great niece, Sylvia Krust.

Walter Crider

A celebration of life for Walter Crider, 67, Lawrence, will be at 7 p.m. Saturday at Salina Elks Lodge and Country Club, 1800 S. Marymount Road, Salina.

Mr. Crider died Sunday, July 15, 2007, at Lawrence Memorial Hospital.

He was born June 26, 1940, in Tescott, the son of Wiley and Lena Percival Crider. He graduated from Salina High School in 1958. He moved from Salina to Lawrence in 2005.

Mr. Crider served in the U.S. Navy. He retired from Advanced Auto Parts in Salina. He was a member and past exalted ruler of Elks Country Club No. 718 in Salina. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and golfing.

He married Barbara Cullen in 1971 in Salina. She survives, of the home.

Other survivors include a son, Christopher Frank and wife Amy, Sydney, Australia; two daughters, Deborah Rector and husband William R., and Stephanie Rasys and husband Eric, all of Lawrence; two sisters, Sandra Yeiser Mesa and Judy Chandler, both of Arizona; and four grandchildren, William A. and Jessica Rector, and Zachary and Tyler Rasys.

MEMORIAL SERVICE AT REUNION ON BOARD THE USS YORKTOWN AT 10:00 AM ON TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2008.

Please plan on attending. A wonderful program has been planned to honor all of our shipmates.

James E. Breedlove, Jr.
XO—1964-65

To the USS Whetstone Association:

Thank you so much for your thoughtful remembrance and sympathy on the death of James E. Breedlove. His time on the Whetstone and the memories and relationships from that time were so excellent! As many of you know, he was an exceptional man. Your sympathy is much appreciated for this difficult loss. Many Thanks.

Laura Breedlove & Family

James E. Breedlove—8/16/29—1/28/08

Jim Breedlove, also known as Dad, Papaw or Pop was a registered native of Texas. He was the only son of James E. Breedlove and Eunice Loneta Breedlove. He enjoyed a loving family and shared many fond memories of growing up in Texas during the Depression and World War II years.

In 1948, while a student at North Texas State, Jim me the love of his life, Laura. They raised six children and several “adopted” ones over nearly 59 years of marriage.


Following retirement, he and Laura continue to travel. Together they visited every state in the U.S., as well as Hong Kong, Great Britain, Canada, Central and South America, Australia, New Zealand, Italy and many other places. Lilla and Buddy Weber, Laura’s sister and husband were frequent travel companions.

He is survived by Laura and six children, Pam Johnson & husband J.J., Vicki Wise and husband John, Barb Flato and husband Clark, Jim Breedlove III an wife Lisa, Valerie Anderson and husband Steven, and Michael Breedlove, 12 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren and sister, Melba.
As I write this article for Marv, it is the Lenten Season. We are approaching Easter, a special time for all of us. I recall growing up as a young child the memories I had at Easter. The song, “Easter Parade” was popular at that time. We’d run down the steps early Easter morning to look for our Easter baskets. My parents taught my brother and me the importance of going to church every Sunday and that Easter was a special day. We wore our Sunday best and for me, it was a new frilly dress, hat and patent leather shoes. What a thrill for a little girl. They said Jesus came alive Easter morning after he had died for our sins, but I did not comprehend the meaning of it. As a little girl, I wasn’t too concerned about sins. After all, I had parents to keep me in line. But as I got a little older, I became more aware of sin and the consequences of it. I began to carry a lot of guilt because of the sin in my life. I believed if I messed up, I would have to live with it for the rest of my life. I had a lot of fear in my life. But thanks for the loving people God put in my life I was able to learn more about this JESUS everyone talks about. I discovered he loved me unconditionally, regardless of my past. I had the privilege of accepting him as my personal Lord and Savior. I was able to surrender everything to him and know I was forgiven. Not by works, only by grace, was I forgiven. How simple can it get? So today, I celebrate Easter with thanksgiving in my heart. He died for each and everyone of us. So I pray each one of you will pray this prayer: Jesus, I am a sinner. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and invite you to come into my heart to be my personal Lord and Savior. AMEN! We celebrate Easter knowing we have life eternal with Jesus. What a glorious revelation! We will be spending Easter with our family here at home. We have an Easter egg hunt for the grandkids after dinner. They have a great time. May you all have a blessed Easter. We are so looking forward to the reunion in Charleston. Get your walking and dancing shoes packed, time is going quickly!!!!!!!!!

Jane Watson, For Chaplain Marv Watson (1960-1961 RM-3)
USS Recruit’s Log entry poem
From Jan. 1, 1963
By George E. Johnson, BMC
Time 0000, Day #1, year 1963,

The, watch has begun.
Moored port & starboard at NTC
On this very quiet New Year’s Eve
Six hawsers to starboard,
Seven hawsers to port,
Starboard chain to Buoy 1,
We’re really held taut.
Concrete and black-top
Her make-believe sea,
She strains her moorings
In a ten-knot breeze.
Draft nine feet forward
Ten feet aft,
It's never change
on this Naval craft.

All services received
Direct from the pier,
She's had no engines
For many a year.
Electricity, steam,
fresh water too,
Furnished by Public Works
Power Plant Two.
North Island to starboard,
A beautiful sight.
To port lies Gate Six,
All's quiet tonight.
Dead ahead lies Camp Nimitz
Where training begins,
A stern lies Point Loma
And the Bali Hai Inn.
Anchor lights bum bright
No stars are in sight,
The decks are silent,
On this New Year's night.
She's made of plywood,
Sheathed in steel.

Recruit from Page 1

Shipmate Passing

My son is a FC in the navy, and we are a Navy family.
I felt compelled to notify your association of the death of one of the past crew members.

Robert Edward Berry 80, of Rushville, died February 29, 2008 at Methodist Hospital, Indianapolis, IN
He was born December 10, 1927 in Rush County, IN the son of the late Lloyd & Crystal (Myers) Berry. He married Martha M. Thompson Dec. 31, 1947 and she survives. He was a powerhouse engineer at the former Carthage Container Corp for 43 years. Robert was a member of the VFW; American Legion & Moose Lodge where he was a Past Governor. He was a Navy veteran of WWII.

He leaves behind his wife Martha Thompson Berry of Rushville; two sons Danny (wife Sheila) Berry and Mark Allen (wife Julie) Berry both of Rushville; three daughters Vicky Kidd, Deama Kay Maupin both of Rushville and Tracie (husband Bill) Hankins of Indianapolis; one brother Norville Berry of Des Moines, Iowa; 11 grandchildren; 21 great grandchildren and One great great grandchild also survives.

He was preceded in death by three brothers and one sister

A Celebration of Life Service will be held 1:00 pm Tuesday March 4, 2008 at Todd Funeral Home 805 N. Main Rushville with Pastor Charles Justice officiating.

Burial with military honors will be at Rushville’s East Hill Cemetery following the ceremony.
A letter the Navy sent to my Mom

I’m sure all Mom’s get one, but I found this one when we were going through my Mom’s things. I thought someone might like to see it.

RECRUIT TRAINING COMMAND 20.0:nl
U.S. NAVAL TRAINING CENTER 5720
SAN DIEGO 33, CALIFORNIA

24 March 1960

Mrs. Ada H. Worman
Navajo Helium Plant
Shiprock, New Mexico

Dear Mrs. Worman:

You will be happy to know that John E. Worman has arrived and is beginning his recruit training. He has been assigned to a company and will learn the fundamentals of becoming a good Navy man.

You will probably have many questions concerning his training and welfare in the Navy. My primary reason for writing is to answer some of these questions, and at the same time request your cooperation in his transition from civilian to military life. One of the major areas of this transition is discipline. Naturally what is expected of a civilian falls far short of what must necessarily be required of a Navy man who could, conceivably at an instant’s notice, be called upon to defend his country. I want to assure you that my officers and men who exercise authority over your son are mature and capable and have served with distinction over many years. They have had special training for this assignment. I am confident that each of them has the ability to perform his duties in the best interests of your son and your country.

Every recruit in basic training wants to hear from his family, therefore, mail from home becomes a morale factor of real importance. In writing to him, please make your letters as cheerful as possible, and encourage him in his training efforts. He has been advised to write to you often and tell you of his new experiences. In order that he may receive his mail with the least possible delay, I suggest you use the following address:

John E. Worman 1234567, SR
Company Number 135
Recruit Training Command
U. S. Naval Training Center
San Diego 33, California

A ten-hour liberty is granted to recruits on either Saturday or Sunday of each of two weekends near the completion of their training. During these two liberty periods, recruits must remain within the immediate vicinity of the city of San Diego. The company of which John is a member has been tentatively scheduled for liberty on the weekends of 14 May and 28 May 1960.

Except in emergencies, recruits are not permitted to receive telephone calls or visitors until they have entered the Advanced Training phase of their training. Your cooperation in abiding by this necessary restriction will be appreciated. His company will be permitted to receive their first visitors on 14 MAY 1960. Visiting is permitted from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sunday and holidays, and after the recruit parades on Fridays until 6:00 p.m. In order to eliminate any possible inconveniences it is suggested that advance arrangements for proposed visits be made directly with him.

In the event that you do plan to visit, may I suggest that you contact him upon arrival in San Diego through the Reception Center. The telephone number for the Naval Training Center is ACademy 2-6141. The Center Operator will then connect you with the Reception Center. When you arrive at the Center, you may enter through Gate No. 6 located in the 2000 block on Rosecrans Avenue. The sentry on duty will be able to give you additional directions to the Reception Center. Enclosed you will find a letter from the Chaplains of the Naval Training Center. In case of emergency (serious illness or death in the immediate family), the Chaplains are available to assist in any way possible. However, in case of such an emergency you should contact your nearest Red Cross Chapter in order to expedite the action desired.

His training does not, as many people believe, consist solely of learning drills and the use of fire-arms. He will spend many hours in classroom instruction where he will be taught, among other things, the history of our Navy. He will see the present modern Navy operating above the sea, on the sea, and under the sea. He will, as his training becomes more advance, realize that this is not merely a history of the Navy--but also the progress of our nation.

He will learn why over one half of the world's land area is dependent upon seapower guaranteed by the United States Navy. And most important, we hope he will realize that the future welfare of our country will be determined by just such young men as he, Service to God and Country is our special privilege. We hope he will stand proudly with us in serving as a mighty instrument for peace, power, and progress.

Please be assured that the best of medical and dental facilities are always available to your son.

May I also take this opportunity to extend to you a cordial invitation to attend the weekly Recruit Brigade Review, which is held for companies graduating during the following week. These reviews are normally held each Friday afternoon at 3:30 p.m.

With all good wishes for his success in training and thanking you in advance for your cooperation, I am

Sincerely,

0. WILLIAM GOEPNER
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer
Bar Flies X
By Tom Lucas

Over seas the girls in the bars that wait the tables come around and entice you to buy them drinks when you get one for yourself are called “Bar Flies”, probably because of the way they pester you while you are in there. They will pester you for every thing they can get out of you. They make a commission from everything you buy.

All of my ship mates knew I didn’t drink any alcohol, but I would go to a few bars in Japan, Hong Kong and in Subic with the guys. I always ordered 7-UP.

Once while in Subic a friend (don’t remember who) and I went to the EM club on base; the friend ordered a Jack Daniels, and I ordered my usual 7-UP. The bar fly repeated the order and started away. My friend said, “She is going to bring you a Seagram 7”. Quickly I called her back and asked her to repeat the order; sure enough my friend was right. I made the correction and she asks me to repeat it. I did and she looked at me like she couldn’t believe her ears, a sailor who wasn’t drinking.

One time in Hong Kong a bar fly came around to the tables with a note pad. She said she was collecting signatures and wanted all of us to sign on the page. She looked pretty good so everyone was signing. When it came my turn I picked up the pin but she grabbed it out of my hand. You see I am left handed and she said “NO NO”, then she stuck the pin in my right hand. I moved the pin back to my left and she removed it again, saying, “It is bad luck to write with that hand”.

I am not superstitious, and was quiet amused at the incident. Just to agitate her, I had someone to hold her while I signed her note pad with my left hand. It was in ink and she couldn’t erase it.

On another of our trips through Hong Kong, I was in a bar with some ship mates and a bar fly landed on my knee. I asked her to get up and she put her arms around my neck and asks me to buy her a drink. I was sitting next to the isle so I slid my foot back behind me and my knee dropped, sending the fly to the floor. She quickly mounted my knee again and I dumped her again. It didn’t take her long to find another perch.

Don’t get me wrong. I love women and have been married to one of them a LONG time. I just don’t like the flies, no matter how many legs they have.

Laughing Lamp is on

Add this to your dictionary ...
Electile Dysfunction : the inability to become aroused over any of the choices for president put forth by either party in the 2008 election year.

What has four legs and an arm?
A happy pit bull.

A letter from one of our ‘Guests’

John Worman
26 Yucca Dr.
La Luz, NM 88337
Dear John

Last week when I received my copy of the American Legion Magazine I noticed in the Navy Reunions The USS Whetstone ( LSD-27 ) and the ~ name and phone number of Mr. Everett Ward. I called Mr. Ward and - began to tell him that I thought my outfit of Marines was aboard his Ship while we was in Vietnam. He agreed the Whetstone was on line in 1969 off the coast of VietNam. He said he had some photos of Marines that were aboard, as well as some beach landings for R & R . I was thrilled to hear that news he sent me the photos but unfortunately I did not recognize any of my outfit fellow Marines.

We were with the First Bart. Twenty Sixth Marines, or the 1/26 . Our tack mark on the side of our gear tanks, trucks etc. was a yellow II V . We were part of the 7th Fleet and the 9th Amphibious Special Landing Team. Perhaps SLT Alpha ? Or the MAB Marine Amphibious Battalion ? Or even the MAF Marine Amphibious Force . We would have participated in operations Daring Rebel, Defiant Stand, Checkers, Pipe Stone Canyon, Bold Pursuit. I am sure that at least one or two of these operations we in conjuction with the Navys 7th Fleet. Daring Rebel for certain. We were launched onto the beach to sweep the island we called Barrier Island.

Would any of your readers have any photos of Marines aboard ship with them in 1969 ? Or any photos of our TACK mark “ V” on side our gear.

I was slightly wounded during operation Daring Rebel and I was choppered to a hospital ship I think the Sanctuary ? I am not sure on that either. If any of your readers have a photo of some Marines returning from the operation bandaged up or patched up. I sure would like to have them It might be me.

I am having a difficult time convincing the Veterans Affairs that I received a piece of shrapnel in my upper right chest on operation Daring Rebel. As your readers well know our gear was in the hull of the ship, with our paper work and medical records. And If I received any paper work up about my wound on the Sanctuary, well It didn’t get to my medical records.

So I would need to verify my story, although my fellow Marines on the beach have already made statements to that affect. It sure would be nice to have perhaps a photo of a Marine with a patch sticking out of his shirt over his right chest. Any information would be most appreciated. I would like to purchase a membership in the Whetstone Association if of course old salty Marines are welcome. On behalf of all my outfit we found that the 7th Fleet with the USS Whetstone, Cleveland, Fort Marion, Iwo Jima, Sanctuary, Repose, and all the rest of Ships that made up this Fleet in VietNam 1969. We found all the Crew to be excellently trained, and we could not have done our job without all of them Thank You All.

You can imagine a bunch of Marines aboard Ship for the first time, wondering just how you were going to get our tanks, trucks, all gear aboard. Then the stern, or back tail gate begins to open and water runs up in the Ship. Well We were scared to death we were all going down. It was unbelievable at the professionalism that it took to do that kind of operation. (Continued on Page 7)
Vietnam, 1969

"Backed by the ship's guns, the landing craft charge the beach"

"OPERATION DARING REBEL"

Daring Rebel, was one of the highlights of this year's cruise. As a member of Ready Group Alfa. Operating with the USS OKINAWA, USS FORT MARION, USS WHETSTONE, AND USS DULUTH, TORTUGA landed and sustained a Marine Amphibious Force.

The landing was made on Barrier Island, a strip of land about fifteen miles south of Danang used by the Viet Cong as an R and R center and a staging area for attacks against interior objectives.

Throughout the operation, TORTUGA operated as primary control ship for all landing craft, regulating all traffic between the ships and the beach. From sunrise till sunset and frequently to the next sunrise, TORTUGA worked to keep the troops on the beach supplied. TORTUGA did such a fine job throughout the operation that she was cited by Commodore Stroud for, "great performance demonstrated while acting as primary control ship in operation "DARING REBEL."

(Continued from Page 6)

Many more stories to numerous to mention, But the Man O'Ver Board drill." early one morning, when the crew dogged down the hatches to keep us ~ below decks was also scary, We thought many times we would have a better chance on the beach that in the ocean. We laugh now but then it was very serious. I would like a copy of the ships Log also perhaps there are photos in it also. Also My Dad was aboard the USS Saratoga at Iwo Jima so I have great resrpect for my Navy Comrades. Thank You Very Much.

Harold B. Clements
441 Hwy 225 West
Greenbrier, Arkansas 72058
Charleston and the Third Day
By Everett Ward

“Oh, Rhett, Rhett, where are you going?”

“To Charleston, Scarlet. I’m going to Charleston!”

“But Rhett, what will I do here without you?”

“Frankly, my dear, I don’t give. . .” What!! 0830!! It’s two and a half hours after reveille and only 30 minutes before the bus takes off for Magnolia Gardens. Damn!! What a dream! ‘Got to get moving!! We’re going to THAT plantation today.

That plantation is called Magnolia Gardens and that is where the Whetstone group is headed. Today’s trip will be the top-off tour of the reunion, the one that puts all the tours and the Whetstone reunion into a lasting perspective of the old South. It will be the final, conclusive bell before the big banquet this evening. It promises to be a dinger!

This tour will make connections with the reign of Henry I, Aubry de Vere Mordaunt and the Battle of Hastings; a procession of royal links through the Earls of Oxford, Earls of Pemborough, Dukes of Dorset, Dukes of Wiltshire, and Lord Sackville, until we reach Sir Walter de Vere who assumed the Saxon name, Drayton. There is a shift to Barbados, and then it comes to pass that the Draytons and the family of Steven Fox begin the historic foundation on which Magnolia Plantations began nearly 300 years ago.

We will see Magnolia Plantations as the product of the old English system of primogeniture, by which, the eldest son always received the family property. Hence, we have Magnolia Plantation, an inheritance of William Drayton in 1738, and finally ownership by John Drayton, younger brother, who purchased the property in 1774, upon the death of William. After the establishment of his own nearby plantation, Drayton Hall, he put the two under one ownership. Rice, better known as Carolina gold, became the staple, and Magnolia became a plantation “don d’riber,” of some 750 acres. Later diversification in the form of indigo, turpentine, tar, pitch, cotton, corn, and wheat carried the weight of the plantation economy.

We will see the history carry us through the Revolutionary War. In 1779, Magnolia and the adjacent plantations on the Ashley River were ransacked by British forces led by General Augustine Prevost as he retreated from Charleston in his defeat in the Battle of Sullivan’s Island. Later, on the grounds of Magnolia were the English encampments of Henry Clinton’s 2nd Grenadier Battalion under Lt. Colonel Abercromby, and four battalions of Hessians under von Kospoth. From there, on March 29th, 1780, Clinton launched 8,000 troops against Charleston using gunboats, 100 flatboats, and long boats to cut off the Continentals in the battle for Charleston and the Carolinas.

Leading into the Great War Between the States, we see Drayton against Drayton. Brother Thomas holding Port Royal, SC, against brother Percival Drayton, commander of USS Pocahontas, is the only example in the Lost Cause of commanding officers of the same family firing at each other. In Mobile Bay, as fleet captain and commander of USS Hartford, the same Percival was on the receiving end of Admiral Farragut’s famous order, “Damn the torpedoes, Drayton, go ahead! Full speed!” Later, two navy ships carried his name: DD 23 in World War I and in WW II, DD 366.

That period marks the burning of Magnolia and the establishment of Magnolia Gardens in the post Civil War era known as Reconstruction. The rest, as they might say is history, and this leads us to the gardens of today.

John Grinke Drayton restored the ruined 800 acre plantation beginning in 1866. Some of the original plantation was sold off leaving nearly 400 acres of which a core of about 60 acres included the garden. Emphasizing basic survival in the Reconstruction era, the main focus was directed to the original gardens. In short order the garden area which began in the late 1600s became a hallmark of attention. By 1870, it had become a major attraction and the gates were opened to the general public. It has been listed as a mainstay in the National Historical Registry and continues to draw thousands to its beauty. Eleven generations later, it remains in the Drayton family, the oldest such garden in the US. It has survived two wars, political intrigues, earthquakes, depressions, and any number of devastating hurricanes, the last being Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

Today, we will see the gardens and take the grand tour. Following the concept that four wheels are better than two feet, we will have a open air shuttle bus-trolley that will convey the group through the various sights.

Be ready with the cameras. The month of May will find the flowers in their peak and there will be a riot of color interwoven by 900 varieties of camellias and 250 types of azaleas, all complemented by hundreds of other types of plants to dazzle the eye. Nature trails; blackwater cypress and tupelo swamps; exotic species of plant life, herbs, and a Biblical Garden; waterfowl—which 150 years ago were the subjects of a visit by John James Audubon; gators, otters—look sharp! topiary gardens; antebellum cabins; an observation tower; many varieties of birds—224 species have been documented in a single year; and even an art gallery await our arrival. Magnificent magnolia, palmetto, dogwood, and stately oak trees reach back 300 years—plenty of Spanish moss—all in splendid abundance—wisteria, peach trees, flowering cherry, thousands of daffodils—a true floral commotion. If it’s green, and if it has flowers, it’s there. Breathe in and feel the dew and savor the honeysuckles! Magnolia is one of America’s garden extravaganzas. You’ll understand why it’s called “The South’s Complete Plantation Experience.” Travel writer Charles Kuralt called it, “My greatest Charleston pleasure.”

When we get near the “Big House,” we can all but hear Tara’s Theme from Gone With the Wind. Our focus on the past will be mixed with nostalgia and reality when we see the makings of a southern plantation on the scale of the stereotypic grandee’ level. There is enough Antebellum and post Civil War history to keep us busy for days. Subject areas include slavery and how the slaves lived, worked, and how they were cared for; life on the plantation; southern agriculture, trade, and the culture of the times. This continues to the post war era and the important question: What happened to the slaves after the war? Other subjects include the current “big house” that replaced the one burned—was it burned by the Yankees, or was it burned by the slaves? We’ll find out. We’ll hear the story
of the present one, built prior to the Revolution, and how it was moved after being dismantled at Summerville in 1873, placed on a barge, floated down the Ashley River, and reconstructed at Magnolia.

We will hear of famous guests at the Plantation, many from the roaring 20s. Names of celebrities such as Somerset Maugham, Luis Untermeyer, Edna St. Vincent Millay, George Gershwin, Henry Ford, English Dukes and Duchesses, and luminaries such as Orson Welles are but a few. Legends of long, late, and glamorous parties linger throughout. We can imagine the laughter of vivacious Sara Simons Calhoun--well heeled, well traveled; outspoken-- reported as the first woman to drive an automobile in Charleston. Noted as a party loving social whip, she brought the jazz age to Magnolia, and married C. Norwood Hastie, 20 years her senior. I wonder if she smoked, chewed gum, twirled beads, and razzle-dazzled to the “Charleston?” Why do I see her driving that old car with a cell phone clutched to the side of her head?

Just about all the Drayton descendents are still on the Plantation. We will see the Drayton Family Tomb still showing the vandal marks left by the British. Last used in 1917, it was entered for repairs in the 1980’s. In place was the 1715 lead coffin of Thomas Drayton, Jr. and that of Drayton F Hastie, the last of the family to be entombed there. Other evidence indicated an occupancy of 14 adults and many children, all dating back to the early 1700’s.

The last of the Drayton Family to be buried at Magnolia was J. Drayton Hastie, Sr. Upon his death in 2002, he willed his ashes to be placed in the Drayton Oak which was planted around 1680 by Thomas Drayton, Jr. at the time of his marriage to Anne Fox. The tree is now home to one of Magnolia’s newest ghosts. It is said that Drayton Hastie, Sr., banker and financier, worked with dedicated vigor to bring Magnolia to the modern era. It was his devoted passion, and now his soul is locked into the heart of this tree.

We have two hours at Magnolia and it’s going to be hard to see everything. It’s going to be harder to leave. But leave we must, after, of course, a quick dash through the gift shop for souvenirs. But we’re got to get back to the hotel. There is business ahead that is very important for the Association. And then there will be the banquet this evening.

The day is classified as a dinger. That is, “bell;” as in “ding-dong.” Well, in comparison, the night is going to be like a reverberating cathedral peal bells and carillon demonstration. In bell terms, that is very heavy duty stuff. As such, our banquet promises to leave nothing to doubt as to the completeness of the Whetstone entourage and its visit to Charleston. Be ready for more fun than ever—an abundance of good food—a light lunch is suggested, good speakers, music, door prizes galore, drawings, great conversation, and pictures—a ship’s party to beat all. It’s going to resonate—a celebration of good times that none of us will ever forget, and when its over, the fun won’t stop because our memories just won’t let it stop. The rally cry, “Remember Charleston!” will be with us for a long time. It will be a hard act to follow.

Y’all com, naw, yo’ her!! We neds ev’bodie ter hep Miss Scarlett fin dat rascal, Mr. Rhett!!

Everett Ward, 67-70

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**Think outside the box**

We went to breakfast at a restaurant where the "seniors' special" Was two eggs, bacon, hash browns and toast for $1.99.

"Sounds good," my wife said. "But I don't want the eggs."

"Then I'll have to charge you two dollars and forty-nine cents because you're ordering a la carte," the waitress warned her.

"You mean I'd have to pay for not taking the eggs?" my wife asked incredulously.

"YES!!" stated the waitress.

"I'll take the special then," my wife said.

"How do you want your eggs?" the waitress asked.

"Raw and in the shell," my wife replied.

She took the two eggs home.

DON'T MESS WITH SENIORS!!! We've been around the block more than Once

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**This is a celebration no one takes any pleasure in planning.**

The event will pay tribute to the 4 million American men and women who answered the call to fight in the first world war.

It will honor the families who sent young Soldiers off to battle long before telephones or e-mail allowed them routine updates on their safety.

And it will salute a generation that led the nation through a Great War, a Great Depression, a great renewal.

But none of it will transpire until one man -- a father, a grandfather, a living piece of history -- dies.

Two weeks ago, the second-to-last American veteran of World War I, Harry Landis, of Sun City Center, Fla., died at the age of 108. Landis’ passing leaves one man, 107-year-old Frank Buckles, the sole surviving U.S. doughboy.

Buckles, of Charles Town, W.Va., remains in remarkably good health, still living at home and doing media interviews, still mentally sharp and physically mobile, still exercising every day. Yet when he goes, so, too, will a generation.

So plans are being made at the National World War I Museum in Kansas City to commemorate the end of an era.

"When the announcement is made that Mr. Buckles is gone and, with him, the entire generation that fought in the Great War, I hope it will be a time for the country to really pause and think about this generation that sacrificed so much for our country," said Denise Rendina, the museum’s spokeswoman. It "will make a war that took place some 90 years ago feel suddenly very real and very close to us."

Worldwide, there are about 14 surviving World War I veterans, half of those being onetime British soldiers, according to Jim Benson, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Veteran (See Buckles on page 11)
These photos were submitted by James Polk (FN 1949-1952) and depict the re-commissioning of the Whetstone on 2 December, 1950. More photos will be in the next issue.
"We will have to be very careful to make this clear that this is the passing of the American World War I generation," Benson said. "Because, thus far, the history of that war continues to live on in a little more than a dozen veterans who served with our allies."

The VA will issue the formal announcement of "the passing of a generation."

Such announcements in the past -- for the death of the last Civil War and Spanish-American War vets -- often have led to controversy when others suddenly claimed to have also served in that war. But the VA, which has researched the issue, believes there will be little dispute that Buckles is the last American World War I veteran.

It is, perhaps, fitting that the museum here in Kansas City is making plans for the passing-of-a-generation ceremony. After all, both of the longest-surviving WW I vets, Landis and Buckles, were originally from Missouri.

Buckles, born in 1901 on a farm near Bethany, Mo., lied about his age to enlist shortly after turning 16. He fought in France and Germany. Later, in World War II, he became a prisoner of war for 39 months after the Japanese invaded the Philippines. He never expected to be the last of his comrades left standing.

"For many years, I would read the figures in The Torch [a veterans magazine] in two columns -- one was the number of 4.7 million-something veterans who served, and the other, which kept going down, was the number of us that were still alive," Buckles told the Tribune in an interview last year. "I knew one day it would come to this. But I didn't think I would be one of the few still around to talk about it."

Although plans for the Kansas City memorial ceremony aren't yet final, some aspects are clear. Buckles will be honored as the last veteran, but the event will focus on all who went before.

Weather permitting, World War I museum officials plan to gather observers at the base of the Liberty Memorial, a national monument to the war erected in downtown Kansas City in 1921. A bugler will play taps, there will be a 21-gun salute, and someone will read "In Flanders Fields," the famous poem by Lt. Col. John McCrae. In addition to Buckles' family, national dignitaries will be invited, including the president, the top generals and famous veterans and Medal of Honor recipients.

It is expected there will be similar events in the nation's capital. Carmella LaSpada, executive director of the White House Commission on Remembrance, said she has been putting together a plan on how to lead the country in remembering the World War I generation.

"What I have found in my job," LaSpada said, "is that you can't always make people care, but you can make them remember. I hope in this situation, we can do both."
Put a positive spin on the facts

The Smith family members were proud.

Their ancestors had come to America on the Mayflower.

Their line had included senators, pastors and the smartest Wall Street wizards.

They decided to compile a family history. To do this, they hired a fine author. Only one problem arose: how to handle that great-uncle who was executed in the electric chair. But the author said not to worry. He could handle that tactfully.

When the book appeared, the family turned to the section on Uncle George. They found a picture of George, standing in front of a wire fence. They read: George Smith occupied a chair of applied electronics at an important government institution. He was attached to his position by the strongest of ties. His death came as a shock.
Ahoy Association Members,

As we move fully into 2008, we realize that spring has “sprung”, the flowers are starting to bloom after a long winter’s nap, and May 18th will be here before we know it! As you all are preparing your gardens, fertilizing your lawns, and getting to those “honey do’s” that you could hardly wait for spring to tackle, don’t forget to add one other important task to your long list…….. SEND IN YOUR RESERVATION FOR THE USS WHETSTONE 2008 REUNION!

Your officers and committee members have, and are, working hard to make sure our shipmates remember this reunion as one of the best! Friends, Fanfare, Fun & Food, it will all be available for us to enjoy.

Speaking of those officers/committee members, yes and significant others as well, it has been a sincere pleasure to have been on their team, serving our Association these past two years. We have learned much in planning our event in May. Behind the scenes, I know that we have all worked hard, spent many hours researching, discussing, writing emails, checking, and checking again. At times it has been frustrating and surprising, we have been patient and impatient, joyed, and over joyed. All of these emotions needed to take place for us to produce an outstanding time for the Association. A big “Bravo Zulu” to each of you. So please sign up for this short but memorable “cruise” beginning Sunday, May 18. We promise we won’t make you “ship over”. Be with us, come see how we did.

As I leave this “command”, I am sure that you will be pleased with your new President, as Mr. Bill Coakley will have the watch for the next two years. He has stayed in touch with me and openly volunteered for any task that I have ask of him. Welcome aboard Bill.

I mentioned some reminders in the January issue….A reunion POD, if you will. Among the requests were a raffle or door prize donation of an item representing your home state and bringing part of your uniform (cover, jacket, jumper – include medals/ribbon bar if you want) for fun group pictures. Additionally, Wayne, our videographer, has requested we each bring an individual picture taken sometime during our Navy experience. He will then scan it to be included as part of his “Then & Now” series he will be capturing on DVD/CD for us; he will return your picture. Wayne also suggests if anyone has the capabilities to have their picture pre-scanned at home we can e-mail it to him by including in the subject line “Whetstone Then, Picture of (XXXX) your name. Wayne’s email address is: (Disregard, event cancelled). And last, but not least, we are looking for one of our mates that can “pipe us aboard” using a bosun’s pipe…. We will have a pipe available.

To be with our Whetstone Association members once again will be the biggest, best, and greatest benefit of “steaming” to Charleston. I will see those shipmates that can make it, and be thinking of those that can not.

Wishing you all fair winds and following seas.

Chuck Hall
Chuck Hall, RM2 1962-1966

Where did it come from?

Hello Shipmates...
Ditty Bags? Originally called ditto bag because it contained at least two of everything -- two needles, two spools of thread, two buttons, etc.

With the passing of years, the "ditto" was dropped in favor of ditty and remains so today. Before WW I, the Navy issued ditty boxes made of wood and styled after foot lockers. These carried the personal gear and clothes of the Sailor.

Today the ditty bag is still issued to recruits and contains a sewing kit, toiletry articles and personal items such as writing paper and pens.
CHARLESTON REUNION

May 18-22, 2008
Ramada Charleston
7401 Northwoods Boulevard
North Charleston, South Carolina
(843) 572-2200

USS Whetstone Rate

Room Rate: $84.00 + Tax
(Queen or 2 Double Beds)

Located in North Charleston, SC just east of I-26 and about six miles north of the airport, this hotel is in close proximity to the major attractions in the Charleston area. This hotel offers 197 guestrooms. All rooms offer complimentary wireless internet access, cable TV and pay movies. Rooms include refrigerator, microwave, coffeemaker, hair dryer and irons/ironing board. A complimentary full buffet breakfast is provided each morning which includes Belgian waffles, eggs, grits, biscuits with gravy, bacon, sausage, cereals, fruit, breads, hot and cold beverages. The hotel offers an indoor pool, whirlpool, outdoor pool and fitness room. Additional amenities include a restaurant (dinner only) and lounge. Parking is free and pets are permitted ($25/day plus $50 deposit).

The hotel operates a complimentary 24-hour airport shuttle. Shuttle is available to local restaurants and Northwoods Mall (within a 5-mile radius) provided shuttle is available and not picking up airport passengers.

Please call the hotel directly (843.572.2200). Request the group rate for USS Whetstone Association Reunion when making reservations to guarantee you receive the special rate extended to our group. Reservations must be made by 3:00 p.m. on 4/25/08 or rate will not be honored.

To confirm reservation, all guests will be required to (1) provide a major credit card at the time of making the reservation to establish a guarantee method of payment or (2) send a deposit equal to one night’s room and tax charges to the hotel reservation office within seven (7) days of making the reservation.

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!

REUNION OPTIONAL EVENTS OVERVIEW

Monday All Day Tour
Fort Sumter
and
Old City Market

Depart Hotel for Liberty Square, board sightseeing yacht to Fort Sumter Tours. After Fort Sumter tour, return to Concord Street in downtown Charleston with free time in the Old City Market for lunch on your own, shopping and browsing before returning to hotel for the evening.

MONDAY EVENING - A free night—No Planned Event

Tuesday Day Tour
Patriots Point and USS Yorktown

Depart hotel for Patriots Point. Memorial Service aboard the USS Yorktown with lunch following in the CPO Mess on the Yorktown. Then explore the ships in Patriots Point Harbor. Visit the Destroyer Laffey, Coast Guard Cutter Ingham, Submarine Clamagore. Vietnam Naval Support Base and view 25 Aircraft and Medal of Honor Museum. This is truly a NAVY day.

Tuesday Evening - Harbor Dinner Cruise aboard the Spirit of Carolina. Harbor Cruise departs Patriots Point and features a leisurely cruise past the magnificent antebellum homes of Charleston’s historic waterfront and Harbour Tour. Yacht has two climate-controlled decks, each with live entertainment, dance floor, full service galley and a well-stocked bar. Third deck is ideal for viewing starry skies and Charleston’s magnificent harbor.

Wednesday Morning - Magnolia Gardens Tour. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, stately Magnolia Plantation boasts of several beautiful gardens, a restored slave cabin, antiques and all that you would expect in a real Southern Plantation.

No golf outing is planned. However, if you want to golf, there is a course near the hotel (fees $35.00). Information will be available on Sunday, 5/18 and transportation can be arranged.

Welcome Reception (Sunday Evening) and Banquet (Wednesday Evening) will be held at Ramada Charleston.

DOOR PRIZES AT REUNION

At this reunion, we are requesting that each shipmate bring a $15-$25 gift that reflects your part of the USA.
A few optional events have been selected for you to participate. If you aren't interested in attending the optional events or only a couple and would prefer to do things on your own, there are many sites and tours in the Charleston, South Carolina area. A Hospitality Room will be available from 12:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 12:00 p.m. for shipmates to gather and visit (refreshments provided). Ship store items and ship memorabilia will be on display. Please bring any items you want to share.

NAME: ______________________________________ PHONE #: ______________________________________
GUEST/GUESTS: ____________________________ E-MAIL: ______________________________________

Complete Reservation Form and mail with money to: Kay Goble, 6200 Emerald Pines Circle, Fort Myers, FL 33966.

Make checks payable to USS Whetstone Association

DEADLINE: Reservation forms and money must be received prior to April 18, 2008

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**Sunday—May 18, 2008**

- **Hospitality Room**: 12:00 pm—11:00 pm
  - Check-in & Registration: 3:00—5:00 pm
- **Welcome Reception**: 6:00—10:00 pm
- **Cash Bar**: 6:00—10:00 pm
- **Welcome (Chuck Hall)**: 6:00—6:30 pm
- **Light Meal**: 6:30—8:00 pm
- **Door Prizes, Etc.**: 8:00—10:00 pm

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**Monday—May 19, 2008**

- **Hospitality Room**: 7:00 am—11:00 pm
- **Tour**: 8:30 am—5:00 pm
  - 2-Part Tour:
    - **Fort Sumter**: 9:30 am—11:45 am
    - **Old City Market & area**: 11:45 am—5:00 pm
- **Free Monday Night - Nothing Scheduled**

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**Tuesday, May 20, 2008**

- **Hospitality Room**: 7:00 am—11:00 pm
  - Tour: 9:30 am—3:30 pm
- **Patriots Point Tour with Memorial Service aboard USS Yorktown and lunch following in Yorktown CPO Mess with free time after lunch to explore surrounding ships & planes.**
- **Dinner Cruise**: 6:00 pm—10:30 pm
  - **Spirit of Carolina Dinner Cruise—Enjoy harbor at night and delicious dinner. Dance to live band.**

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**Wednesday—May 21, 2008**

- **Hospitality Room**: 7:00 am—11:00 pm
- **Tour**: 9:00 am—12:00 pm
  - **Magnolia Gardens Tour**—Garden & Tram Tour of Plantation
  - **Men's Business Meeting**: 2:00—3:30 pm
- **Banquet**: 5:30 pm—11:00 pm
  - **Group Photos**: 5:30 pm
  - **Cash Bar Available**: 6:00—11:00 pm
  - **Welcome**: 6:00 pm
  - **Dinner**: 6:30—8:00 pm
  - **Speaker: Bob Conklin**: 8:15—9:00 pm
  - **Entertainment**: 9:00—11:00 pm

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**Date** | **Optional Events (Transportation & Gratuities Included in Price)** | **May be Paid First Day of Reunion** | **Cost Per Person** | **Total # Attending** | **Amount Enclosed**
---|---|---|---|---|---
5/18/2008 | Welcome Reception @ Hotel (Light Meal w/hot and cold hors d’oeuvres) | Registration Fee Per Shipmate (Covers expense of hospitality room and miscellaneous items) | $15.00 per shipmate | 1 | $15.00
5/19/2008 | All Day Tour (Fort Sumter and City Market Tour w/lunch on your own in city) | | | | |
5/20/2008 | Patriots Point Tour (Memorial Service & Lunch aboard USS Yorktown & View Ships) | | | | |
5/20/2008 | Spirit of Carolina Dinner Cruise (Harbor Cruise with Dinner Cruise & Dancing) | | | | |
5/21/2008 | Magnolia Plantation Tour (Garden and Tram Tour of Plantation) | | | | |
5/21/2008 | Banquet (Ramada Charleston) Photo Op at 5:30; Cash Bar available at 6:00 Welcome & Dinner with Speaker & Entertainment Following | | | | |
To order any Ship’s Store item please contact Marion Goble, 6200 Emerald Pines Circle, Ft. Myers, FL 33966, (239)768-1449 or e-mail: shipstore@usswhetstone.net When submitting an order, please make checks payable to USS Whetstone Association. All jackets and golf shirts are navy blue with gold lettering. T-shirts are navy blue with gold lettering or gray with navy lettering. Hats are navy blue with gold silhouette of ship, white with navy blue silhouette of ship or red with gold silhouette of ship, or camouflage with gold silhouette of ship (red and camouflage hats and DVD of Reunions are new items).

Items for Sale:
- Ball Caps (With Silhouette) $20.00
- Cruise Books (57, 61,66,67 & 68) $20.00
- DVD of Reunions (1996-2006) $10.00
- Golf Shirts (S,M,L,XL) $35.00
- T-Shirts (S,M,L,XLG, XXL) $20.00
- Jackets (S,M,L,XLG, XXXL) $50.00
- Jackets (XXL & XXXL) $52.00
- Mouse pads w/Whetstone Picture $10.00
- Yosemite Sam Patches $8.00
- Zippo Knives w/Ship Silhouette $20.00
- Zippo Lighters w/Ship Silhouette $13.00
- Whetstone Pictures $15.00

Note: All Prices Include Shipping

A Note from the CO

DEAR WHETSTONE FRIENDS, THE TIME IS NIGH AND THE WEATHER IS BECOMING JUST GREAT FOR A VISIT TO CHARLESTON. OUR GUESTS HAVE REQUESTED THE BEST TIME FOR A CHARLESTON VISIT AND I RESPOND- ANYTIME; BUT THE BEST DATES ARE MAY AND OCTOBER. I AM SURE THAT ALL WHETSTONE MEMBERS/GUESTS WILL BE PLEASED WITH ALL THAT CHARLESTON AND ENVIRONS HAVE TO OFFER.

ALL OF YOUR TOUR PROGRAM ARE VERY GOOD. THERE ARE MORE GOOD SIGHTS HERE TO SEE IF SOME MEMBERS ARE EXTENDING THEIR VISIT. THE DINNER CRUISE IS A REAL PLEASER FOR VISITORS, WEDDING PARTIES ETC. THE FOOD IS EXCELLENT.

THERE IS AN EXCELLENT GOLF COURSE AT THE CHARLESTON AFB AND THE GREEN & CART FEE, LAST YEAR, WERE $22 FOR MIL. RETIRED AND $23 FOR GUESTS.

DORIS AND I DO NOT PLAN ATTENDING THE TOUR EVENTS BUT WE DO FEEL THAT WE WILL VISIT THE SUNDAY OPENING, THE HARBOR CRUISE AND THE BANQUET. IT MAY BE THAT MY WIFE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GO ON THE HARBOR CRUISE, HOWEVER, WITH HER SAFELY ACCOUNTED FOR, I PLAN TO GO TO 'SEA' WITH THE WHETSTONE CREW AGAIN.

MY WIFE HAS A CARDIO VASCULAR MEDICAL PROBLEM WHICH LIMITS HER MOBILITY. SHE PLANS OF COURSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE EVENTS.

THAT WE HAVE INDICATED. I AM VERY PLEASED THAT YOU AND THE OTHER WHETSTONE MEMBERS HAVE CHOSEN CHARLESTON AS THE REUNION SITE. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE WHETSTONE MEN AGAIN. I WILL BE 85 THIS SUMMER, SO I MAY NOT REMEMBER SOME NAMES

AND IF SO PLEASE HELP.

SMOOTH SAILING,
RAY SEABAUGH