

# The Navy Yard Association Newsletter



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Volume VI, Issue 2

June 2006

Published Quarterly

## NYA Bulletin Board

If you wish to reach more than 600 of your fellow NYA members, this bulletin board is available for your use to post information. Contact Veronica Cullum or send e-mail to [benefit@mareislandnya.com](mailto:benefit@mareislandnya.com)

### Shop 38 Luncheon

Sardine Can Restaurant, Vallejo;  
Second Wednesday of each month  
POC: Rudy Lukes, (707) 643-3225

### Vallejo Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Florence Douglas Senior Cntr, 333 Amador St., Vallejo  
Second Tuesday of each month at 1:15pm  
POC: Elsie Babcock; (707) 643-7914

### Napa Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Napa Senior Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa  
Last Wednesday of each month at 1:30pm  
POC: Dick Champion; (707) 253-7242

### Mare Island Historical Park Foundation

Mare Island Quarters "A"  
Third Monday quarterly (Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct) at 10:00am  
POC: Ken Zadwick; (707) 557-1538

### Nuclear Inspectors' Luncheon

Sardine Can restaurant, Vallejo  
First Wednesday of each month at 11:30am  
POC: Dick Barlow; (707) 642-6022

### Ocean Engineering Luncheon

Sports Bar inside the Marriott Hotel, Napa  
Last Wednesday of each month at 11:30am  
No POC at this time

Mary Rutland, Robin Leong, Jim Porter, Bruce Christensen, and so very many more. This year's event also brought many faces we hadn't seen in a while, such as Rose Utterback, a former director, Carmen Merriman, a new director, Elsie Babcock, museum docent, and Kathy Tomko, still working for the Navy in not-too-far-away Fairfield (just to mention a few). Sincere thanks to Howard and MaryAnn Fitzpatrick, and Gordon and Jan Triemert, who spent many hours making the museum ready for the reunion, as well as the Sea Cadets and Fire Cadets for their capable assistance with security and parking. And, I offer a very special thank you to Lennar Mare Island and the Historic Park Foundation for co-sponsoring the event. To these and all the people from Mare Island's rich history: You are the reason the NYA is still going so strong!

When all was said and done, more than 700 friends of Mare Island were in attendance at the reunion (an all-time record for Mare Island reunions)!

The Memory Books, group photos and DVD's should be sent out soon to those who ordered them. If you did not get the chance to order one of these items, we will have a limited supply on hand. Please contact one of the NYA Directors for ordering information. As a reminder, Memory Books are \$10 each; Group Photos (panoramic shot) and photo DVDs are \$20 each.

It is our intention to sponsor future events like the employee reunion for you, our membership. We are always open to suggestions as to what types of events or gatherings you might

## President's Corner

Ralph McComb

As this is the first newsletter following our 10 Year Post-Closure Celebration and Employee Reunion, I would very much like to thank all the Officers, Directors and Members-at-large who contributed so much towards ensuring the celebration was the wonderful event it turned out to be. There are a few names that always come to mind, such as Veronica Cullum, Sonya Domingo,

enjoy. Feel free to contact one of your NYA Directors with your ideas.

One of the welcome guests at the post-closure celebration and reunion was the former Navy research and recovery vessel, Transquest. The ship once launched Mare Island-built deep submergence vehicles like USS Turtle and many others. Transquest was also used to recover returning space capsules for NASA when they splashed down in the Pacific.

Transquest is now owned and operated by Case Blaznic, who is very much interested in meeting with former shipyard workers and sharing the future vision for his ship. NYA Director and entrepreneur Vic George has already begun lending his expertise to restoring the bathysphere that once operated from Transquest's deck to the ocean floor. This ship and its history can be viewed at <http://Transquest.org>.

Another bit of information you may find of interest: NARFE is sponsoring a "Meet Your Candidates" open forum on August 22, 2006, in the Joseph Room at the Vallejo City Library. This will be your chance to ask questions of candidates for local congressional district seats. Please feel welcome to attend.

Finally, on behalf of the NYA and local community, I would like to thank Captains Tom and Kim Stombaugh of the Solano County Salvation Army for all they have contributed, as they move to their new duty assignment. They were truly a blessing to the local area.

## **The Mare Island 10-year Post Closure Celebration and Employee Reunion - A HUGE SUCCESS!**

More than 700 people attended the celebration/reunion commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Closure of Mare Island Naval Shipyard on Saturday, April 1, 2006. The event was held in the Old Pipe Shop, Building 46, which is now the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation

Museum. Mostly ex-Mare Island civilian employees and Navy personnel attended the event, which was also open to the general public. There were attendees from throughout the state of California as well as from out-of-state; e.g. Washington, Texas, Nevada, Colorado, Texas, Hawaii, etc.

During registration (both reserved and walk-in), the NYA signed up nearly 100 new members. Attendees received a bag of mementos, including a commemorative admission ticket that contained the schedule of events for the celebration (along with a classic photograph of the nuclear submarine, USS VALLEJO launching). A professional photographer took individual photos of every attendee as well as candid photos of attendees taken throughout the day. These photos have been assembled into a Memory Book that is available for purchase at \$10 per copy. More than 150 books were pre-ordered during the celebration, and the NYA has obtained a limited number of books that will be available for purchase directly from the NYA.

A group picture was taken in the main bay of the Old Pipe Shop showing several hundred of the attendees, and is available to those who wish to purchase a copy. **For those of you who ordered and have received this panoramic photo, you may have noticed that the panoramic photo eliminated a couple of dozen people located on the left (west) side of the picture. If you purchased a panoramic photo and are one of those who were omitted from the photo, call the photographer at (714) 265-3638. A replacement photo, showing the people previously omitted, will be sent to you free-of-charge (you may keep the first version).**

A buffet luncheon was offered for all attendees, as well as tours of Quarters A, St. Peter's Chapel, and the Transquest. There were several information booths inside the museum providing updates related to Mare Island. The Mare Island Master Developer, Lennar LLC, provided information about the future reuse of

Mare Island; the Vallejo Convention and Visitor's Bureau showed how Mare Island is being advertised for tourism; there was a display promoting the return of the ex-USS DRUM to Mare Island; and a group discussed their vision of displaying the battleship ex-USS IOWA in the Bay Area, possibly at Mare Island.

Many attendees indicated they had not been back to Mare Island since its closure 10 years ago; others said that it was their first time back to Mare Island since they had retired in the 1970s, 1980s, etc. The NYA received several suggestions and requests to repeat this celebration at least every five years. Your NYA Board of Directors has taken this into consideration and will inform all NYA members of when and where the next reunion/celebration will be held.

**Be sure to check out this year's  
4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade  
in  
Vallejo, California**

In recognition of being a valued member of the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce, the Navy Yard Association has been invited to represent the NYA as a Grand Marshall of the 2006 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade! The NYA has been a proud member of the Chamber since 1946.

One or two NYA representatives will ride on a float provided by the Chamber. Come out and wave a flag for the NYA on the 4<sup>th</sup>!



## **Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Update**

Bruce Christensen

### **Bring the ex-USS DRUM Back to Mare Island**

The revised application for donation of the SSN 677 (ex-USS DRUM) to the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation (MIHPF) for display in historic Dry Dock #1 was discussed in the March 2006 NYA newsletter. The ex-DRUM was the last nuclear submarine built by Mare Island Naval Shipyard, has now been decommissioned and defueled, and is awaiting reactor compartment removal by Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

The City of Vallejo is now requesting, before they will endorse the revised ship application, that the MIHPF guarantee there are sufficient funds available to return (refloat and tow) the ship to the Navy in the event that the ex-DRUM cannot be maintained. The City is further requiring the ex-DRUM to have a structural spool-piece, representing the removed reactor compartment, installed by Puget Sound Naval Shipyard prior to the submarine being towed to Mare Island. The MIHPF had initially planned to have the fore-shortened submarine towed from Puget Sound, and have the reactor compartment spool piece manufactured and installed after arrival at Mare Island in Dry Dock #1 (reminiscent of the hull section that Mare Island shipyard workers installed in the USS PARCHE).

The remaining work by Puget Sound Naval Shipyard needed to ready ex-DRUM for tow involves removal of the reactor compartment and connecting the ship halves back together. This work is scheduled for no sooner than 2007, and more likely 2008. After the ex-DRUM work by Puget is completed, the MIHPF will hire a towing company to prepare and tow the ship to Mare Island.

There is still a need to raise funds to cover towing, dredging and docking costs, so please

keep the DRUM Project in mind when making your charitable donations this year. Donations should be made to the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation, which is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization. Please mail your contributions to:

Mare Island Historic Park Foundation  
328 Seawind Drive  
Vallejo, CA 94590

### **Call for Volunteers at the Mare Island Historic Park**

There are many tasks for which those interested in helping to preserve Mare Island's proud Naval History can volunteer. These include gardening of the grounds around St. Peters Chapel and Quarters A and B; maintenance work and/or cleaning of the Chapel and Quarters; or being a tour guide for historical tours or a docent to oversee events that take place within these historic buildings. At the Mare Island Naval Historic Museum in Building 46, volunteers are needed for inventorying and cataloguing of Mare Island and Navy artifacts, as well as for working on the individual artifact displays.

Recently, the NYA received a request from ex-Mare Islander and NYA member Joyce Giles, who is coordinating an effort to open the Mare Island Museum on a regular basis.

Joyce made the following request: "We are trying to get the museum in Bldg. 46 open for people to drop by and share in Mare Island's history. To do this, we need people to commit to 2 or 3 hours on a Saturday and/or Sunday to volunteer as docents. Volunteers would lead visitors through the artifacts and help in the gift shop. Two people working together would be best, so that one could be in the museum answering questions from visitors while the other stayed in the gift shop. We plan to have labels on most displays for people to do self-guided tours; however, visitors tend to donate more to the museum for a docent-led tour.

If we can get enough volunteers/docents, we would like the museum to be open a couple of days each week, but a commitment would be critical to ensuring that enough docents would be there when scheduled. If there were enough volunteers/docents, each volunteer would only need to be on duty perhaps one or two days per month, or whatever worked best. [Joyce has agreed to keep the schedule and volunteer record of the hours worked.]

We will be adding to and changing the displays. Currently, we have a basic museum with a good cross-section of displays, but we are looking forward to developing more and expanding on what we have. We encourage some NARFE or NYA members to volunteer to take some training and help out. With the nice weather, more people, including new Mare Island residents, will be strolling around the shipyard and seeing the sights. Also, the Vallejo and Mare Island Welcome Centers send us customers."

Note: Joyce is in the Building 46 office most days throughout the week, so people can drop in and discuss volunteering, or she can be contacted via email at [JIG313@AOL.COM](mailto:JIG313@AOL.COM). Joyce can train new volunteers whenever required and would like to get people signed-up through the summer months as soon as possible.

Tasks at the Mare Island Historic Park provide an opportunity for ex-Mare Islanders, as well as others interested in learning more about Mare Island, to become involved personally in the history of the base. Many of the tasks can be scheduled to be worked at the volunteer's convenience and most allow people to work together in an environment that often results in the making of new friends. Each task provides gratification and many are informative and educational. In addition to contacting Joyce Giles for work at the museum, if you're interested in volunteering for other tasks, please contact Ken Zadwick at 707-557-0662.

There are a few openings on the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Board of

Directors. If you would like to observe one of the meetings, please plan to attend the next Director's meeting as a guest. The meeting will be held on Monday, July 17, 2006, at Quarters A in the dining room at 10:00 AM. Several NYA members are currently on the Foundation's Board, so you will feel right at home when you attend the meeting.

## **Membership update**

James Porter

Currently, NYA membership stands at 751, which surpassed our 2006 membership goal of 675! Dental membership stands at 391 members.

We offer a warm welcome to new members (since March 2006) Rick Andrews (Bob Yeasted), Robert L. Barfield (Nancy Matlock), Ted Bayham (ENGEIO Inc.), James Beavers, Jim Bergstrom, Maria Bitagon, Nick Bianchi, Dennis A. Blake, Arthur Carter, Jerry Carter, Charles L. Casten, William G. Chauvin, Dean Cherry (Jim Porterfield), Donald Chun, Clifford Clark, Pat Clark (Bob Yeasted), Barbara Cooley (Phyllis Honodel), Ted Correy, Larry Crawford, Rosetta Crews, Clifford De Lacy, Sammy O. Dent, William Dunphy, Christine Feaster, Allan Fortes, John W. Foster, Lori Gallegos, Victor T Gasser, Renon Haley, Richard Hassel, Gary Heindricks, Delmar J. Holson Jr., James R. Huntoon, John Ivory, Jay Jacobs, Gary Johnson (Bob Yeasted), Bob Johnston, Andy Kinane, Floyd E. Langerman (Dave Runge), James R. Londo, Raymond Lingerfelt (Carmen Merriman), Bob Lutomski (Mike Christensen), Ronda Madrid (Joy), Ray Massaro (Bill Martin), Robert Mitchell (Carmen Merrimen), Homer Moore (Carmen Merriman), Leland Morgan, Vicki L. Myers (Carmen Merriman), Benjamin E. Nunes, Robert Paedon, Al Parks, Bob Pendleton, LCDR Phil Phillips USN Ret, Keith Pieper, Robert F. Pierce, Philip L. Reed (Phil Fisher), John W. Rodman, Thomas Rodgers, Frank Ropiak (Lee Zajak), Joseph E. Rubay (Marbay Realty), Gary Salvadori (Minute Man Press), Teddi Shull, Sam Shoults, Norman Tallaksen, Brian Thompson, Bud F. Turner, Jerry

W. Wigington, Donald Winters (Mike Hansen), Dennis Wonn, Gerald Yeager

Welcome back to former NYA members: Vince Aquino (01), Daniel Gillen (03), Robert Huelsmann (99), Russell L. Johnson (95), David L. Owen (96), Mark Pittman (02), Dori A McGee-Lundy (04), Kevin Rodman (00), Belle Routen (04), David Sanderson (01, Ralph McComb), Christopher Sargent (95), Gene R Schroeder (95)

We are missing the address of a new member who joined during the recent reunion. If anyone knows the address or contact information for Gary Heindricks, please contact Robin Leong at [robin\\_leong@netzero.net](mailto:robin_leong@netzero.net).

The NYA Directors try to keep the membership directory as accurate and up-to-date as possible. If you think we don't have your current e-mail address, please consider sending it to us. We will never sell or otherwise disclose your address to any third parties, nor will we send frivolous messages.

## **Benefit Officer's Column**

Robin Leong

### **Dental Benefit Notes**

As a reminder (especially for new members), please remember that the NYA still has a competitively priced, active dental plan. We offer either a pre-paid dental plan (with specific plan dentists) or coverage with Blue Shield. For information on our dental plans, please call me at (707) 643-1287, or send an e-mail message to me at [robin\\_leong@netzero.net](mailto:robin_leong@netzero.net).

There are 10 dental members who have moved without forwarding their new addresses to us. They are: Osborne Williams Jr., James F. Ray Jr., Henry Leavy, Valencia N. Brashear, Frank A. May, Amy T. Aton, Charles W. Montgomery, Richard W. Colvin, Timothy E. La Barr, and Richard A. Snyder. If any of our current members knows how to get in contact with any of the above-mentioned members, please contact me

via phone at (707) 643-1287 or via e-mail to robin\_leong@netzero.net.

### **General Notes to Members**

With so many new members, I'd like to note a slight goof on our membership form. We forgot to ask for e-mail addresses. So, if we don't have your e-mail address, please forward it to me at robin\_leong@netzero.net.

At the reunion, many of you did not know that we would facilitate obtaining a retired DOD retirement cards (to those who retired from Mare Island **ONLY**). You can do this by sending a request with a copy of your Standard Form 50 (showing that you retired from Mare Island); a passport photo; a self-addressed, stamped envelope; and your weight, height, color of hair, color of eyes, to the NYA, PO Box 2034, Vallejo, CA 94592.

Ask your ex-Mare Island buddies who retired if they have a DOD retirement card; if they don't, let them know about this great deal. This is a free service that is included you're your NYA Membership. Okay, so what can you do with the retired DOD card?

1. You can utilize excess inventory condos from Resort Condominiums International (RCI). These can be 3 to 5 star international places. One of our NYA officers is a member of RCI, wrote a message to them, and this was their reply. (Thanks to member Helen Morgan for bringing this to my attention!) "RCI is happy to offer our excess inventory to U.S Government employees. For information about the Government Employees Travel Opportunities program, please visit [www.GeTravelOp.com](http://www.GeTravelOp.com). When you are ready to arrange a vacation, please call (877) 867-3639." You may also send an e-mail directly from their website.

2. NYA Director Doug Ghiselin wrote this e-mail to the Armed Services Vacation Club Program: "I am a retired career civil service employee of the Navy, having in excess of 30

years service at the time of my retirement. Can I participate in the Armed Services Vacation Club program? If yes, will my confirmed reservation be subject to displacement by someone in a higher eligibility grouping such as active duty military? If I am eligible, can I make a reservation with out restrictions? Thank you." Their response was: "Sure, you are eligible. And, once you have made the reservation, no one can take it from you!"

Here is the web site:

[www.afvclub.com/search.asp](http://www.afvclub.com/search.asp). (For best results, you will need Netscape 7.0 or a newer version of Internet Explorer. Either site gets you to the same website for cheap, luxurious accommodations ...\$249 a week for 2, 4 or 6 people in great holiday venues.)

3. Additionally, I talked to a retired Navy chief who reminded me that with your retired DOD card you could use the some of the lodging at military bases, especially their RV parks. You can find out all of this info in a book called "Temporary Military Lodging Around the World" AAFES Order Code K716N on the web site <http://www.military.living.com>.

4. You can play golf at the military golf courses, especially the ones in Hawaii, and you can stay at the Hale Koa, a beautiful hotel in Honolulu and use their conference rooms.

### **And then there was Yesterday**

Sue Lemmon  
Shipyards Historian

#### BASEBALL MEMORIES

Ah, Spring again! And, time to recall some less troubling memories of baseball, when the term "steroids" was practically unknown. And also time to remember those days when we had to take Annual Leave for special events.

April 12, 1960, was Opening Day at Candlestick Park, and many Mare Islanders asked for the day off, including this author. It was the

day that the Giants played St. Louis at the brand new park, and we had seats in Row 6, Section 22.

My supervisor was Shipyard Commander RADM L. V. Honsinger, who approved my request for leave. He didn't hesitate to sign the leave slip, and added that he too planned to attend. In the discussion that followed, it became apparent that he knew little, if anything, about the new park except that it was just south of Hunters Point Navy Yard. The C.O. of that establishment was his friend and they planned to go to the game together.

In discussing the anticipated huge crowd and attendant parking problems, he said he and the Captain planned to walk to the game from Hunters Point, since "it's not very far, according to the map."

I suggested there was no easy, direct route by foot, but didn't know much about that area. The local papers predicted that a big crowd was expected, and Toby and I, with Grant and Millie Teicheira, planned to be part of the throng that would drive and seek a parking place.

The following day, the Admiral reported that he and the Hunters Point C.O. had in fact walked to Candlestick Park from Hunters Point. However, it had been an unpleasant and surprisingly long walk, traipsing through fields of weeds, some mud, along a railroad track, and over a fence. They were late getting to the game, and a bit chagrined at their adventure.

As for the game, a roaring crowd of more than 41,000 helped unveil the new park. The Giants won, 3-1, on Sad Sam Jones' three-hitter over the St. Louis Cardinals. And, the Admiral and the Captain took a taxi back to Hunters Point.

**The USS HALIBUT 2006 REUNION  
October 26-27-28, 2006**

Shipmates: This is the 30th year since the decommissioning of the 587. Mare Island Naval Shipyard witnessed the first raising of Halibut's commissioning pennant, and sadly, the striking from her gaff of that symbol of a United States Ship. MINSY also laid her keel straight and true, gave her the first taste of water, modified her guise many times, then finally readied her for her final trip to the Ship Breaker.

After 30 years, all that remains of her now lives in the memories of her crew. We were part of her—and, she was part of us "...which formed a symbiosis among her mass of steel, machinery, and weapons which gave her life..."

Therefore, it is appropriate that, this year, we unite to honor her memory in Vallejo, California.

**For information:**

USS Halibut (SSGN/SSN 587) 2006 Reunion  
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