

The Navy Yard Association Newsletter

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Special Edition

Mare Island Naval Shipyard - 150th Anniversary

NYA Bulletin Board

If you wish to reach more than 700 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

Shop 38 Luncheon

Country Kitchen Restaurant, Vallejo; 2nd Wednesday

each month

POC: Rudy Lukes, (707) 643-3225

Vallejo Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador St.,

Vallejo; 2nd Tuesday each month at 2:00pm.

POC: Helen Zajac; (707) 644-7565

Napa Chapter of NARFE Meeting

Napa Senior Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa, last

Wednesday each month at 1:30pm.

POC: Dick Champion; (707) 253-7242

Mare Island Historical Park Foundation

Mare Island Quarters "A;" 3rd Monday quarterly (Jan,

Apr, Jul, Oct) at 10:00am

POC: Ken Zadwick, (707) 557-1538

Navy League

Red Lobster Restaurants, 1180 Admiral Callaghan Ln,

Vallejo; 1st Monday each month at 12:00 noon

POC: John Hoffman, (707) 642-4925

Concord Naval Weapons Station - Reunion Picnic

Saturday, September 18, 2004

Buchanan Park in Pittsburg, CA

POC: Dan Meckfessel, (925) 825-820

Mare Island Employee Reunion

Thursday, September 16, 2004

Quarters A, Mare Island

Check this newsletter for details!

Mare Island Naval Shipyard's 150th Anniversary

On September 16, 1854, Commander David G. Farragut established Mare Island Navy Yard, which would go on to achieve many Navy firsts, build 513 Navy vessels and contribute significantly to the military security of the United States during peacetime as well as in time of war. This year, the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Mare Island Navy Yard will be celebrated on September 16 and 17, 2004. While it may seem unusual to celebrate the establishment of the Shipyard after it's been closed, what we're really celebrating is an event that contributed to a community that is still thriving today.

The Navy Yard Association of Mare Island is proud to join with the City of Vallejo, the Navy League - Council 1, the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation, the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce, The Vallejo Convention and Visitors Bureau, the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, Lennar - Mare Island, Touro University, the Mare Island Business Association, and many other organizations and

individuals in planning and co-sponsoring this anniversary celebration.

150th Anniversary Celebration Events

The venues for all events are at Mare Island. The following is the schedule for the planned events during the two day celebration:

Thursday, September 16, 2004

Event: Dedication of Monument Commemorating 150 Years

Time: 10:30am

Place: Alden Park

Cost: No cost

Master of Ceremonies:

Vallejo Mayor Anthony Intintoli

Speakers:

Ralph McComb, NYA President

Ken Zadwick, MIHPF President

Dick Lemke, Navy League Past President

Monument Dedication:

Capt. John Cavender, USN (Ret.)

Monument Unveiling:

Sue Lemmon, Mare Island Historian

Event: Two-Hour Bus Tours of Mare Island

Time: 11:30am, 1:30pm and 4:00pm

Cost: \$12 Adults; \$6 Children (12 yrs. and under)

Place: Meet at the old Employment Office parking lot (Corner of Tennessee St. & Wilson Ave.)

Two-hour bus tours of Mare Island will be offered. The tours will be guided by Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Docents. Tours include Walnut Avenue Mansions, St. Peter's Chapel, Building 46 (Old Pipe shop), and many other historical sites.

Mare Island Bus Tour reservations may be made by mailing a check, made payable to the "Mare Island Historic Park Foundation" by no later than September 10, 2004. Please be sure to specify the desired date and time for the tour. Mail your check and tour preferences to: MIHPF, 328 Seawind Dr., Vallejo, CA 94590. Reservation

lists will be checked prior to boarding the bus.

Event: Employee Reunion sponsored by the Navy Yard Association

Time: 12:00noon to 3:00pm

Cost: \$5 NYA members (before 9/4/04)

\$10 NYA members (after 9/4/04)

\$15 Public (non-NYA members)

Place: Quarters A (Shipyard Commander's residence)

The Navy Yard Association is sponsoring an employee reunion at Quarters A. The cost includes access to Quarters A, and a catered buffet-style luncheon (served from 12:30-2:00pm). 150th Anniversary memorabilia will be available for purchase.

Navy Yard Association Reunion reservations may be made by mailing a check, made payable to "NYA," to: NYA, PO Box 2034, Vallejo, CA 94592. NYA members' orders postmarked by September 4, 2004: \$5 per person (limit of two tickets per member). NYA members' orders placed after September 4, 2004: \$10 per person (limit of two tickets per member). Non-NYA members: \$15 per person. Guest list and name tags will be held at the point of entry

Friday, September 17, 2004

Event: Dedication of Medal of Honor Plaque

Time: 10:30am

Place: St. Peter's Chapel

Cost: No cost

Master of Ceremonies:

Capt. Jim Moor, USN (Ret.)

Event: One-Hour Bus Tours of Mare Island

Time: 1130, 1300, and 1430

Cost: \$8 Adults; \$4 Children (12 yrs. and under)

Place: Meet at the old Employment Office parking lot (Corner of Tennessee St. and Wilson Ave.)

One-hour bus tours of Mare Island will be offered. The tours will be guided by Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Docents. Tours include Walnut Avenue Mansions, St. Peter's Chapel, Building 46 (Old Pipe shop).

Mare Island Bus Tour reservations may be made by mailing a check, made payable to the "Mare Island Historic Park Foundation" by no later than September 10, 2004. Please be sure to specify the desired date and time for the tour. Mail your check and tour preferences to: MIHPF, 328 Seawind Dr., Vallejo, CA 94590.

Reservation lists will be checked prior to boarding the bus.

Event: Gala Celebration Banquet Dinner

Time: 6:00pm to 9:00pm

Cost: \$50 per person (advance reservations only)

Place: Building 46

Master of Ceremonies:

Mayor Anthony Intintoli

Guest Speaker:

Secretary of the Navy

Gala Celebration Banquet reservations may be made by mailing a check, made payable to "MI-150/Mare Island Historical Park Foundation," by no later than September 13, 2004. There will be assigned seating; so if you desire to sit together, please send in your reservations and checks together. Mail your checks to: John Hoffmann, PO Box 3370, Vallejo, CA 94590. Commemorative tickets for the banquet will be held at the door.

150th Anniversary Memorabilia for Sale

The Navy Yard Association designed a coin to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the establishment of Mare Island Naval Shipyard. The coins are available in three metals. We invite you to purchase this collector's item, as a limited number of coins have been struck. The front and back of the coin is shown at right.



Commemorative Coins:

Bronze - \$5

Copper - \$5

Silver - \$20

Commemorative Postal Cachets:

Canceled Cover - \$2.50

Tee Shirts and Hats:

A variety of colors/sizes will be available

All memorabilia will be available for purchase at the Navy Yard Association Employee Reunion on September 16, 2004.

NYA Volunteers Needed During Reunion

An event the size of the 150th Anniversary Celebration requires an enormous amount of effort. There are always more tasks than there are volunteers to complete them. Please consider lending a hand to committee members Bruce Christensen, Jim Porter, Bob Yeastead, Ralph McComb, Robin Leong, Doug Ghiselin, etc., on Thursday, September 16, 2004, starting at 9:00am at Quarters A.

The following tasks will require "people-power:"

- Set-up of tables and chairs (between 9:00am and 10:00am).
- Crowd control, ticket sales, name tags (between 11:30am and 1:30pm).
- Memorabilia sales (between 12:00noon and 2:00pm)
- Take-down of tables and chairs (between 3:00pm and 4:00pm).

Mare Island Memories

In past issues, we asked that you submit your fondest or most vivid memory of Mare Island. Following are the memories submitted by NYA members. *(Editor's note: It was indeed nostalgic to read the following submissions-- which prompted my own walk down memory lane. To coin a phrase, "thanks for the memories!")*

My most memorable moment was the first day that I started my job: June 20, 1966, in the Public Works Department, Building 47, 10 days after my high school graduation. Working in the same building as the Shipyard Commander was "scary" to me. I just couldn't believe all the employees, jitneys, buses, military personnel, and the size of the shipyard. I was actually working at the place that I only used to see from the other side of the water. I was amazed. Thirty-one years later, I retired from Federal service!

Penny L. Hicks

Working with various shops, codes and special project to accomplish our mission. Performing unusual pipe welding tasks; also supervising some of the best pipe welders in the nation. "Do it right the first time" will never be forgotten.

James A. Wesley, Jr.

Seeing the first nuclear-powered submarine being launched in October 1957--the SSN 583 SARGO--this was the first time I had the opportunity to witness a launching.

Venlette (Vern) Goodrich

So many memories, so few words. Thirty years there, and so many memorable experiences with so many people and so many memorable people.

Teddy G. Beevers

I was the first Navy EEO Coordinator, hired by Rear Admiral Red McQuilkin in 1966. In three years, we made lots of progress. Blacks into supervision, females into the apprentice program. Progress!

Louis I. Sawersby

"Return of Norman Scott from Philippines Victory." My inspection aboard was devastating. Superstructure sieved. All officers lost (First Class Machinist Mate officiating). Torpedoes jammed in tubes. Guns and ammo exploded in turrets, riddled crews. Deck, mass destruction. My pride in our fleet and crews' victories bolstered me to fight the battle of Mare Island. God Bless America.

Aleatha W. Edsall Slater

The evening that the SSN-665 sank seemed like one of my worst days. I thought it would be the end of my shipyard career.

Charles Jordan

During the early 1960s--while working as an outside sheetmetal worker--we were removing ventilation from inside a submarine that was fastened to the quay wall, the sub lurched and went dark. We went topside only to find out we were in the middle of the channel. They were turning the sub around, and no one told us. We were very surprised.

Donald A. Fenton

The Pipe Shop (X56) told the pipefitters that they had to walk twenty feet apart. They could not walk together to the boat or the shop. A couple of guys got 20 feet of parachute cord, tied it between them, and walked down the waterfront. When the Shop Superintendent got wind of what was going on, walking 20 feet apart went away.

John R. Grant

USS SHAW (DD 373) was severely damaged on December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor. My most memorable experience at Mare Island was when she was joined to her new bow early in 1942. I knew then she would live to fight again--and she did!

Lou Burgelin, PP - NYA

Riding my bike to and from work in the 80s.

Ron Leneker

My position within the Design Division was memorable, but my personal best memories include being on loan to the Inspection Dept., with four SSBNs on the ways; and my time in both Code 280 (OE) and Code 290 as Test Director, SSN 618. But, most memorable was working with the great people in Design, Production Department and ship forces. I retired in 1989.

Robert "Benny" Benevento

I would like to mention the one thing that really made my day. This occurred during one of the times we had so much overtime that we were compelled to work nights and Saturdays, and also a couple of Sundays. One day, I was working so hard I neglected to go to the cafeteria to get something for lunch. This gentleman named "Jackson," who always liked to sweet-talk the ladies, happened to come into the office. Although he was pesky at times, I was happy to see him that day. I asked him if he would mind picking up some food for me. Three co-workers heard me and said, "do you mind asking him to bring us some food also?" I needed four dinners. I gave Jackson a list numbering the items 1, 2, 3 and 4. When Jackson returned, he had one roast beef dinner, two turkey dinners, three ham dinners and four chicken dinners. He said, "Honey, you didn't give me enough money; also, I had to use my fork lift to carry this food." Some of my other co-workers purchased the extra food. We had a good laugh off of Jackson. He was so humble. He was a good sport about it. He said, "Next time, honey, don't number the items, because it confused me." To tell the truth, from the way the work was stacking up, I believe we were all a little confused. Jackson has since gone to that land beyond. May his soul rest in peace.

Rie Cooper

I was fortunate to work at Mare Island and be involved in the nuclear aspects of construction, repair, testing and refueling of nuclear ships from 1957 to 1993. However, these 36 years are now mostly a blur. Therefore, my most memorable day was my retirement, when I was able to relive the highlights of my shipyard experiences with family and friends--one last time!

Bruce Christensen

Like many others, my first and last days held the most significance for me. The first day--after seeing a short film and being issued a badge number that would be my only unique identifier from all the thousands of people already there--I can remember my total amazement in the sheer size of the shipyard as I carried my tool box from the central tool room in Bldg. 128 to Dry Dock #4, where I began my first assignment as part of the "sail team" overhauling the USS Grayback (an assignment from which I still bear the scars). Then, the last day--the day the Shipyard was to close. A day filled with people, speeches, displays and

activities--all trying to capture the "essence" of Mare Island. I will always remember that day as full of a great sense of loss and sadness. Yet, I felt then (and still feel) an overwhelming, shared sense of pride and accomplishment knowing that even facing an unknown future, we, as Shipyard employees, did what was necessary to bring an honorable end to our service.

Ralph McComb

Please use this sheet if you plan to make your reservations in advance.

NYA MARE ISLAND EMPLOYEE REUNION

SEPTEMBER 16, 2004 - 12:00 noon - 3:00pm

RESERVATION FORM

Name _____ Street/PO Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

NYA Member: Yes _____ No _____

Number of Reservations (Limit of 2 per member) _____

Amount enclosed _____ \$5 per member postmarked by 9/4/04;

\$10 per member after 9/4/04;

\$15 per non-member

BECOME A MEMBER NOW!!!!

Pay the yearly membership fee of \$15, and you'll be entitled to the NYA member reservation fee for the Mare Island Employee Reunion. My membership dues (\$15 to "NYA") are enclosed - Yes _____

No _____