

The Navy Yard Association Newsletter



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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

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

however, it's on to our next (and bigger) challenge: planning the next event or activity that would appeal to all of you—our NYA members. As you might imagine, this is no small task. So, we are asking you for your ideas or suggestions on what that might be. Then, we'll put our heads and hands together to work on making your idea a reality. Now, this doesn't mean we'll just sit on our hands and wait for one (or many) of you to give us an idea. We are discussing (and will continue to discuss) ideas—and ways to make them happen—at our monthly meetings.

Speaking of monthly meetings, October marks our annual "all members" Directors' meeting, which is a great place to share ideas if you don't necessarily feel inclined to write them down and mail them to the post office box on Mare Island.

In any event, we look forward to hearing from you on this or any other subject that might contribute to keeping our group going strong. And, thank you for your continued support!

The Memory Books, group photos and photo CD's from the reunion have been sent out to those who ordered them. If you did not get the chance to order one of these items, we have a limited supply on hand. Please check this newsletter for details on how to obtain any of the available reunion memorabilia.

President's Corner

Ralph McComb

As summer comes to a close, your NYA Officers and Directors all hope your expectations were met and that you enjoyed the busy, hot travel season.

Following the huge success of our reunion, your NYA Officers and Directors enjoyed a short break in our schedule, too. Now,

**Navy Yard Association
Annual "All Hands" Meeting**

Date: Monday, October 16, 2006

Time: 5:00pm-6:00pm

**Place: NYA Office, Building 535
Mare Island**

*All NYA members are cordially invited to
attend!*

Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Update

Bruce Christensen

Many openings are available for those interested in volunteering to help preserve Mare Island's proud Naval History. 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, being a tour guide for historical tours or a docent to oversee events that take place within these historic buildings.

Earlier this summer, those associated with the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation mourned the death of Midge Lund, who was the assistant curator of the Mare Island Museum for many years. The Mare Island Naval Museum located in Building 46, is currently being managed by Joyce Giles who continues to need volunteers for inventorying and cataloguing of Mare Island and Navy artifacts, as well as for working to create additional artifact displays.

Tasks throughout the Mare Island Historic Park provide an opportunity for ex-Mare Islanders, as well as those interested in learning more about Mare Island's history, to become involved personally in the efforts to preserve that history. Most 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 either at the museum during the week or by email at jig313@aol.com for work at the museum, if you're interested in volunteering for other Historic Park Foundation tasks, please contact Ken Zadwick at 707-557-0662.

Openings are available on the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation Board of Directors for those interested in helping to shape the future of the Mare Island Historic District. If you would like to attend as a guest, the Director's meetings are held on a quarterly basis at Quarters A at 10:00 AM. Several NYA members currently serve on the Foundation's Board of Directors, and the next meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2006.

Membership update

James Porter

Currently, NYA membership stands at 763, which more than surpassed our 2006 membership goal of 675! Dental membership stands at 389 members.

Welcome back to former member John "Jeb" Beatty (Rich Daffron).

The NYA offers our sincere condolences to the family of recently deceased member Chapman Burk.

The 10th Annual Reunion sponsored by the NYA was instrumental in helping us garner 100 new (or returning) members. Many people came to the Reunion after hearing about it by word-of-mouth. The employee reunion is still our best method of recruiting new members.

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

Hope you've managed to beat the heat and have been having a wonderful summer!

There is not much new information regarding benefits. However, due to the recent influx of new or returning members, we have experienced a surge of interest in the NYA Dental Plan. The NYA Dental Plan still is one of our best benefits. We offer both a pre-paid dental plan and a Blue Shield plan. If you are interested in one of our dental plans, please contact me directly at (707) 643-1287 or via e-mail to robin_leong@netzero.net. Also, you can call the NYA office phone at (707) 562-1812 or send an e-mail request to benefit@mareislandnya.com.

Notice to all current Dental Plan members: Our new Dental Plan Administrator is:

First Tier Administrators
P.O. Box 119338
Reno, NV 89511

Telephone Number: (866) 565-7557 ext 114 (for Larry Carter) or (775) 786-9637.

Thanks to NYA members Helen Morgan and Frank Sharkey. Their efforts ensure that members who did not obtain their Mare Island Retirement cards (Form 55) when Mare Island closed are now able to get them. In the past, I have referred to this card as a Retirement Card or a Retired DOD card. In fact, the card actually is a U.S. Government Identification card, which shows you retired from Mare Island Naval Shipyard. This card enables access to U.S. Military bases (when there are no "high" or "red: alerts), along with other benefits. For example, you can get onto Travis Air Force Base to go to their Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Office (called the Crosswinds) and get discounted tickets for Six Flags Marine World, Disneyland, and other similar venues. You can also utilize Travis' Cypress Golf Course. Incidentally, the NYA has decided NOT to offer these kinds of discounts

anymore. The reason we've stopped offering this benefit is that it costs quite a bit, and the size of our membership does not merit a larger discount. The Military MWR offers a better bargain.

By the way, another good resource for discount tickets is California State Automobile Association (membership required). Do some comparison shopping. Depending on the number of tickets/days of access you desire, CSAAA could be a better bargain than Travis AFB.

Mare Island Employee Reunion Memorabilia

If you missed out on purchasing any of the memorabilia items on sale at the reunion held on April 1, 2006, we are offering the following items for sale. Quantities are limited, so send in your orders today!

Memory Book	\$10
Panoramic Photo	\$20
Photo Collage CD	\$20
(includes all candid shots taken during the reunion)	

Send your check or money order (made payable to "NYA") to:

Navy Yard Association
P.O. Box 2034
Vallejo, CA 94592

Include \$2.50 for shipping and handling (per order)

With your order, please specify the name and address to which the item(s) should be mailed.

What's happening on Mare Island?

Bruce Christensen

Currently, there are just over 100 businesses located on Mare Island. However, even with the high number of commercial establishments, the number of jobs is still less than half of the total employment that existed when the shipyard closed over 10 years ago.

Large private residences continue to be constructed at Mare Island—but as is the case throughout the Bay Area—the real estate market has leveled off and, in some instances, has declined. There are now more than 175 new homes that have been sold and are occupied west of Azuar Drive (formerly Cedar Avenue). Another 25 homes are under construction, but construction beyond those 200 residences will be slower than during the past two years. The Mare Island grammar school has reopened and is operating at near capacity.

There are still no significant retailers (grocers, restaurants, gas stations, cleaners, fast food, etc.) located on Mare Island to serve these new residents (apparently due to the relatively low population base), even though it includes some residents associated with Touro University.

Mare Island now has a ‘rotary’ or ‘round-about’ street intersection—perhaps a first for Vallejo. This intersection is located at a five-way intersection where Azuar Drive, Walnut Avenue and 12th Street intersect. However, if you plan to check it out, you’ll need to approach it from Walnut Avenue or 12th Street (now named Bagley Street) because Azuar is currently closed for repairs between the old 5th and 9th Streets (now named Flagship and Rickover Streets).

Quarters A (recently painted) and B, along with St. Peter’s Chapel and Building 46 continue to be maintained as historic landmark sites at Mare Island. Arrangements to use these buildings for weddings, receptions, memorial services, and other events may be made by contacting the Mare Island Historic Park Foundation at 707-557-0662.

News on TransQuest

Victor George, EGEEngineering

R/V TransQuest is a submersible launch platform for ocean research, dive support, or treasure hunting. The former flagship of the Lockheed Corporation’s Ocean Research Division, this vessel is a twin diesel screw, 1967

Oceanographic SURFAC support ship with twin transom design. She will accommodate submarines up to 50’ long and 50 tons. TransQuest is a solid, well equipped, and well maintained vessel that has been at the forefront of submersible activity. She served as the mother ship of Lockheed’s “DeepQuest” submarine and then went on to 20 years of classified service with U.S. Navy Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicles (DSRVs), including Mystic, Sea Cliff, Turtle and Avalon. TransQuest was also used to recover returning space capsules for NASA when they splashed down in the Pacific.

On October 18, 2006, the TransQuest will travel to the Cordell Marine Sanctuary to view underwater wrecks for toxic releases.

During the ten-day mission, they will be testing two one-man submersibles, DeepDiver 2000. They have a large acrylic half-dome over the seated operator. They have cameras, arms and are capable of diving to 2000ft. Also, the team will be testing Deep Ocean Exploration and Research’s new remotely operated vehicle, which has arms, cameras, and is capable of diving to 3200 feet, along with a new high definition camera. A large screen will be mounted in the communications room.

The TransQuest will be visiting the Ocean Research Development Center at Mare Island a few times over the next month to take on supplies, drop off equipment and make repairs and installations.

Victor George, owner of EGEEngineering, welcomes NYA members to visit them at Mare Island and to volunteer to assist TransQuest and EGEEngineering as they prepare for the first of many ocean projects.

START EARNING TQ CREDITS NOW!! Volunteers can acquire TransQuest hats, t-shirts, turtlenecks, coffee cups, knives, leather jackets and other TransQuest clothing and memorabilia by logging hours with Ralph McComb. Get a hat today, or save up your hours

for the cool, black leather jacket with the red and silver TransQuest logo on it.

And then there was Yesterday

Sue Lemmon
Shipyard Historian

FARRAGUT'S LOG

A review of Farragut's log book covering his first week here reveals how busy he was, and a glimpse of the weather 152 years ago.

September 16, 1854. Commander Farragut took command of the Island this day, and forthwith warned off all the Squatters, viz. Turner, Roy, Vera, Gilbert, and Antonio Pinto. Weather very fine but warm. Thermometer 86 deg.

September 17, 1854. Looked around the Island for the localities specified in the plan of the Navy Yard – employed in ascertaining the amount of property on the Island that would be advantageously used by the government. Weather fine but warm. Thermometer 86 deg.

September 18, 1854. WARREN came up today to be moored at the Yard for the use of the Yard as a Store Ship for the accommodation of the officers of the Yard. Employed a carpenter to work on the flag staff – Vera. The weather is fine but warm. Thermometer 90 deg. at noon. Paid 500 dollars for towing up the ship and 192 dollars for pilotage.

September 19, 1854. Fine day, made arrangements to dock the WARREN – employed 2 or 3 more men to work on the Yard to fix foundation for the Flag Staff. Sent to San Francisco for lumber and other appliances to work with. Thermometer 86 deg.

OLD GHOSTS PUT TO REST

In October 1988, we learned of a ghost that inhabited Bldg. 77. The body of a Lieutenant Wilson arrived on the IROQUOIS

along with obsolete ordnance, and was stored there with no details as to what to do with it. The officer had died while on duty with the Asiatic Squadron in 1879, and supposedly had been buried in China. But here he was, resting in the Ordnance building.

His wife, re-married, sent a handsomely carved tombstone to mark the resting place of her late husband. Eventually she came to Mare Island, and the mystery was solved. A fitting funeral was held on August 8, 1887, for Lieutenant Commander Samuel Wilson, with a creditable display of soldiers and sailors. It took a long time, but he finally was put to rest at the cemetery at the south end of the Yard. (We are indebted to Peggy O'Drain for providing some of these details.)

Whether the ghosts in Bldg. 77 have subsided, we don't know.

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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