

PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

GUNBOAT RIDERS

VOLUME 1 - NUMBER 1

WINTER EDITION

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"GUNBOAT RIDERS"

This is the first edition of "GUNBOAT RIDERS" news letter that I will attempt to write on a quarterly basis. A news letter editor friend of mine wanted to call his news letter "ALL HANDS" but thought that the Navy might take exception to his plagiarism. I initially wanted to call our news letter "MEMBERS OF THE CREW", but I knew that many of the crew members from the CANBERRA association would object to my plagiarism, too. GUNBOAT RIDERS was a suggestion by Paul McGurgan, (USS Crockett).

What I plan to do is to solicit note worthy or perhaps some not-so-worthy information from the crew members of all the ships and staffs that may be shared and perhaps enjoyed by other crew members. I am certain that there are many war stories out there that would produce some fond memories or maybe just a bit of humor. There are also some ship mates that would like to find a long lost buddy. I assure you that must be the case, I have already had some requests for information. More on that later in this news letter.

1998 PEORIA, ILLINOIS REGISTRATION PACKAGE

Included in this news letter is a registration package for the 1998 Patrol Gunboat Reunion at Peoria, Illinois. I have also included a tentative reunion program listing information about the hotel, tours available, Buffet Dinner and Saturday Night Banquet menu selections including prices, as well as other information about the reunion. You will also find a preprinted Hotel Registration Card for the Holiday Inn City Centre. All hotel reservations and payment must be made directly with the hotel. All tour reservations and meal selections must be made with Armed Forces Reunions of Norfolk, VA. Keep in mind that the cutoff date for all reservations is 1 July, 1998. After that, prices and reservations are subject to availability and no longer guaranteed. Full refunds for all tours, meals and other activities will be sent in the event you must cancel (less a \$3.00 processing fee) provided cancellation is received before July 20th. Hotel rooms may be canceled up to 24 hours prior to scheduled arrival.

1998 REUNION HOLIDAY INN CITY CENTRE

To bring you up to date, I have selected a location for the first annual reunion in Peoria, IL. While there are still many loose ends, I assure you that the necessary information will be distributed in ample time for you to make your own arrangements. The dates for the 1998 reunion will be from Wednesday August 12, 1998 through Sunday August 16, 1998. Arrangements have been made for us at the **Holiday Inn City Centre**, 500 Hamilton Boulevard, Peoria, Illinois. The hotel has guaranteed our special room rate for five days before until five days after so you can come early and stay late, if you desire. For those shipmates arriving early, we have made arrangements for the hospitality room to open at noon, Wednesday. It will be stocked with beer, soft drinks and snacks at no charge and will remain open until noon Sunday. Directions to the Hospitality Room will be posted in the Hotel Lobby. The Hospitality Room will be the center of activity during the reunion. After checking in to your room, it should be the first place that you go. A representative from Armed Forces Reunions INC. will be there to distribute your event package with all tickets and other information about the 1998 reunion.

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Patrol Gunboat Association



1998 NATIONAL REUNION

After narrowing the list of hotels down to the Holiday Inn City Centre, I took a few days and visited the hotel. I am pleased to report that the rooms are very attractive and spacious. The dining room is well run with an excellent menu, and there is a small lounge that is a perfect setting to socialize if you want to get away from the hustle and bustle of the Hospitality Room. The hotel management is quite anxious to host our reunion, and was very receptive to my requests. The Holiday Inn City Centre is located at 500 Hamilton Boulevard in Peoria Illinois, just 1/2 block from Interstate 74. While I am arranging tours and other entertainment, there will also be some free, on your own time. You can join up with another shipmate and visit some of the attractions in the city, most within walking distance of the hotel. You should check with the concierge in the hotel lobby about tickets and transportation, if necessary. The hotel provides free transportation to many of the local attractions. Peoria is located 157 miles southwest of Chicago. The Holiday Inn City Centre is located 8 miles from the Greater Peoria Airport and offers complimentary shuttle service to and from the terminal. There is free covered parking next to the hotel for registered guests. The Holiday Inn City Centre has a gift shop, barber and beauty shop, as well as car rental. There is a gym and workout area with a myriad of equipment. Our special guest room rates will be \$71.00 per night, for a Single, Double, Triple or Quad (all guests must be from the same family), \$85.00 per night for a room on the concierge level or other room upgrade. This is significantly lower than the regular room rate. These rates are subject to current local taxes of 11.5%.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

I want to include in this first news letter, an acknowledgment of my appreciation for the assistance and encouragement of the Secretary / Treasurer of the USS CANBERRA (CA-70 / CAG-2) Reunion Association. He has helped me from the beginning. He assisted me with the purchase of my computer; showed me the many things that can and frequently do go wrong at a reunion, helped me know how incredibly satisfying it is to see a four day event unfold after a year and a half of planning. He provided me with the newspaper and magazine data base necessary for announcements, motivated me to get those 630 announcements printed and in the mail; he provided me the program and newsletter templates necessary to make this newsletter come alive. Many of the items that will be available at our first reunion were the result of his research and phone calls; costs of our ball caps will be significantly less due to his allowing us to "piggy back" our order onto his. For his encouragement and guidance, I am truly grateful. My father, Paul D. McManuels Sr, is a true shipmate, and a great friend.

COMMEMORATIVE BALL CAPS

We will have Commemorative Ball Caps and Coffee Mugs available at our First Annual Patrol Gunboat Reunion in Peoria this year. The caps are custom made for us by Eagle Crest. They are a high quality cap and are a "Made in America" product. I will be ordering a sufficient quantity based on the number of reservations received by Armed Forces Reunions along with a few extra "Just in Case". The caps will be navy blue with an embroidered Patrol Gunboat on the front. We will also have First Annual Patrol Gunboat Reunion Coffee Mugs. The hats and coffee mugs will be available at the Registration Table in the Hospitality Room. Both the hats and mugs will have a 1998 Patrol Gunboat Reunion, Peoria, Illinois logo. One coffee mug along with a Peoria Reunion souvenir will be free for each crew member attending the reunion. One Peoria Reunion Ball Cap will be "FREE" with the purchase of \$20.00 worth of raffle tickets (raffle to be held following the Saturday Night Banquet Dinner). Additional ball caps can be purchased for \$15.00 each or "FREE" with an additional purchase of \$20.00 in raffle tickets.

WHERE WE STAND BY THE NUMBERS

As of the end of 1997, here is where we were "BY THE NUMBERS".

USS ANTELOPE, 33 USS ASHEVILLE, 15 USS BEACON, 2 USS BENICIA, 11 USS CANON, 25
USS CHEHALIS, 5 USS CROCKETT, 30 USS DEFIANCE, 11 USS DOUGLAS, 12 USS GALLUP, 10
USS GRAND RAPIDS, 16 USS GREEN BAY, 5 USS MARATHON, 21 USS READY, 34 USS SURPRISE, 4
USS TACOMA, 36 USS WELCH, 7
USS GRAHAM COUNTY, 8 COASTAL SQUADRON THREE, 7
COASTAL DIVISION TWENTY ONE, 1 PATROL DIVISION THIRTY TWO, 1

Patrol Gunboat Association

1998 50/50 DRAWING



To enhance our coffers for this and future reunions, we have decided to have an annual 50-50 drawing. Tickets will be sold throughout the year with the drawing of three winners immediately following the Saturday Night Banquet Dinner. It is my desire to present the lucky winners with a share of the proceeds equaling at least \$1,000.00.

Included with this first edition news letter is your first opportunity to purchase these 50 - 50 tickets. At \$1.00 each or 12 for \$10.00, you can help to **SUPPORT A GROWING REUNION ASSOCIATION.**

Additional 50 - 50 tickets will be made available upon request. The first 12 tickets were purchased by Shipmate **Joseph A. Patton** of Arlington, WA. Pat was a QM onboard both Ready and Tacoma.

Please complete the left portion of the ticket(s) and return the stubs to me with your check or money order made payable to the Patrol Gunboat Reunion Association. The winners need not be present at the drawing.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

For those of you that are planning your trip to Peoria in an RV or motor home and plan to stay at a park, there are facilities in the area surrounding Peoria. Spindler Campground is located in East Peoria, just across the river and about 15 minutes from the hotel. The cost is \$12.00 - \$15.00 per day for full hookup. Their phone number is (309) 699-5615. Another location, Jubilee College State Park (309) 446-3758 also provides hookups for RV's. They are located about 7 miles west of the hotel. Call the park for information, directions and reservations. Those of you who are driving an RV or motor home and still plan to stay at the hotel can make arrangements for free parking by contacting Harold Wilson at (800) 474-2501. The hotel provides free off-street parking for guests; however, their parking garage has a height limit of 9' 10". If your vehicle is taller than that, please contact Mr. Wilson to make parking arrangements.

1998 REUNION SURVEY

Enclosed you will find our 1998 reunion survey for Peoria, Illinois. The survey requests basic information that will be a great assistance in making plans for our 1998 reunion to be held from **August 12th through August 16th** in Peoria, Illinois.

If you feel right now that you will definitely make the reunion, barring some catastrophe, give me a 100% Sure. If you feel that you are going to give it your best shot, but reserve the right to change your mind, give me a 75% Sure. If you would really like to come but have a few obstacles in your way to work out, give me a 50% Sure. If you know that you will not be able to make this reunion, give me a Can't Attend. Regardless of your answers today, you can always change your mind at a later date. Remember, it's a survey, not a commitment. Please take a moment to complete this survey and return it by **March 31, 1998.**

REUNION NOTICE HITS THE STREETS

Once the contracts with the hotel and with Armed Forces Reunions were signed, it was time to contact various newspapers and magazines across the United States. As I have mentioned earlier, I acquired a newspaper and magazine data base from the USS CANBERRA Reunion Association that listed 570 newspapers and 62 national magazines. I used this data base to mail out my original announcement in July, 1997. Based on the phone calls that I received from many of the papers, I would guess that I received publication from about 25 to 30 percent of them. As I understand it, a reunion announcement that does not include a date and location equates to a free advertisement to solicit names only. Almost every newspaper that would not publish my original announcement assured me that if we did decide on a date and location, they would gladly publish an announcement. I must admit that my first press release was, in fact, an attempt to use the media to assist me in locating former crew members. If you are intrigued by statistics you might be interested in knowing that if all the newspapers that we sent reunion notices to publish our notice, it will be in 38,730,643 newspapers. With each survey that I send to a former crew member, I ask for the name and address of their local newspaper so that I can make sure that it is in my data base file. I am also working on adding some of the weekly papers from various locations as I identify them.

THE HOSPITALITY ROOM AND REGISTRATION TABLE

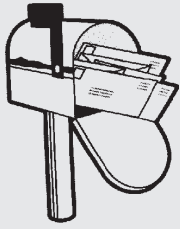
Immediately after getting settled in your rooms at the hotel, the next place you should visit is the Hospitality Room which will be open 24 hours daily. There will be refreshments available at no charge. There will also be a representative from Armed Forces Reunions INC. there to get you your name tags, schedule of events, tour and meal tickets, seating assignments for the banquet dinner, as well as some mementos of the reunion. Registration schedule will be posted.

GOLF

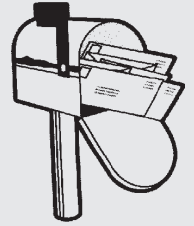
I have had numerous requests for information on golf during the reunion. I am providing the following information for those who may be interested.

The Hotel Convention Coordinator is an avid golfer and has agreed to make arrangements for those who want to get in eighteen holes. If you are interested, contact Harold Wilson at (800) 474-2501 and he will make arrangements for a golf day on Wednesday, 12 August. He suggests an 8 AM tee time. The estimated cost will be \$25.00 per person which includes all fees, as well as rental of a cart. For those left behind, don't worry, the hospitality room will be open starting at noon.

Patrol Gunboat Association



FROM THE MAILBAG



On this page, I want to print some of the comments that I have received from shipmates who either call or write to me. Due to space restrictions, I cannot include all of these comments. I will include those for which I have space in the current publishing period.

- ☐ **From Shipmate Leroy Blankenship:** The WWW has a lot of garbage on it, your efforts have reinforced the value of the internet as an information medium. It has given me a chance to catch up with a number of old running mates from the 70's when we were young and crazy.
- ☐ **From Shipmate David Davis:** Thanks for the great Web Page, it brings back memories.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Joe Julius:** I was WEPS/SUPPLY on Defiance, couldn't have asked for a better "first real job" in the Navy. I remember 50 degree rolls off Hatteras with a bad hangover like it was yesterday. Looking forward to seeing my old shipmates.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Paul "MAC" McGurgan:** Has it really been 25 years? I'm looking forward to sharing a San Miguel with all my old shipmates.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Gary Wentworth:** Live in West Virginia now, really work for a living instead of having fun in the good ole USN.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Stanley Zalinka (AKA Mouse):** I am looking forward to the reunion, I have been waiting for this for 20 years. I was aboard Green Bay at a time when I really needed the military... It was the best thing that I did in my Navy career.
- ☐ **From Shipmate John G. Kost:** Those were exciting and challenging years for all of us. We were young and fearless.
- ☐ **From the friend of a Shipmate, George Hamilton:** Thanks for your help in locating Harry Magee... The bonds of an old navy buddy are forever... For years I thought he was killed in action and whenever I went to Washington I avoided the wall knowing that I would see his name there...

FREE ROOM UPGRADE DRAWING FOR EARLY RESERVATIONS

All shipmates that have both their Hotel and Banquet Reservations in by no later than **June 1st**, will be eligible for a special drawing that will upgrade the winners room to the Holiday Inn Suite Level. The winner will be notified by telephone, and the hotel will be advised after the drawing. The number of nights awarded to the winner will be based on your confirmed Hotel and Banquet reservations on June 1st. If your confirmed reservation has already been made in the Concierge or Suite Level, your room rate will be reduced to the Standard Room rate of \$71.00 per night for your entire stay. If your reservation was for a Standard Room, you will be upgraded to the Suite Level with the rate staying at \$71.00 per night. Remember, all of your reservations must be made and received by Armed Forces Reunions Inc. by June 1st.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

There are just a few items that I would like to address in this newsletter. First off, why I decided to put this reunion together. The simple answer to that is, that after twenty six years in the Navy, most of it sea duty, the one command that I remember with the greatest fondness, is the USS CANON. My wife Nancy and I were talking about this and we both feel that our tour on CANON was the highlight of my Navy Career. As I have said many times to former PG Crewmembers, I think PG Duty was the neatest thing since popcorn. Next item, many crewmembers have called me and asked for addresses and phone numbers of other crewmembers. As I said in the beginning, I will not release this information. I will forward a letter if you put it in a stamped envelope, and then put that envelope in another along with a note telling me who you would like it forwarded to. The names and addresses of all crewmembers that I have made contact with will be available in the hospitality room at the reunion. The last item that I would like to address is the Saturday Morning Business Meeting. Among the topics that I would like to discuss are the location for the 1999 reunion, finances, and election of association officers. At a minimum, we will need a Presiding Officer, and a Chaplain. There will be plenty of time for suggestions and comments on this years reunion as well as future reunions.

Patrol Gunboat Association

1998 PEORIA REUNION INFORMATION

Following is this year's hotel information for Peoria, Illinois:

Place: **Holiday Inn City Centre**
500 Hamilton Boulevard
Peoria, Illinois 61602
Telephone: (800) 474-2501

Date: **Wednesday, August 12, 1998**
to Sunday August 16, 1998
(check-in time is 4:00pm,
checkout is 12:00pm)

(Bell Captain can arrange to check baggage for guests arriving early)

Special Patrol Gunboat Reunion Guest Room Rates are \$71.00 per night for all standard rooms.

These rates will also be honored five days before and five days after the reunion dates on an availability basis. Rates are subject to a current tax of 11.5%. Guest parking will be available for passenger type vehicles at no charge.

Friday Night Buffet Menu

Mixed Spring Salad, Potato Salad
Green Beans Almondine, Fresh Garden Blend
Vegetables

Au Gratin Potatoes, Baked Ziti Pasta

Baked Ham, Beef Tips in Wine and Mushrooms

Rolls, and Choice of Beverage

Total Price including Tax and Gratuity \$22.00

Saturday Night Banquet Menu 2

Fresh Fruit Compote, Fresh Garden Salad

Baked Chicken Marsala

Fresh Garden Blend Vegetables

Twice Baked Potato

Ice Cream Sundae

Total Price including Tax and Gratuity \$23.00

Saturday Night Banquet Menu 1

Fresh Fruit Compote, Fresh Garden Salad

10 oz. Roast Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus

Fresh Garden Blend Vegetables

Twice Baked Potato

Ice Cream Sundae

Total Price including Tax and Gratuity \$27.00

Saturday Night Children's Menu

Fresh Fruit Compote, Fresh Garden Salad

Hamburger and French Fried Potatoes

Choice of Beverage

Ice Cream Sundae

(For Children 12 years and under)

Total Price including Tax and Gratuity \$9.00

There will be live entertainment following both the Friday Night Buffet Dinner and Saturday Night Banquet. We will be selling raffle tickets in the hospitality room for the Saturday Night Banquet drawing. We will also draw the winning tickets for the 50/50 drawing on Saturday Night after the raffle table drawing. There is \$10.00 worth of 50/50 tickets included with the newsletter. Additional tickets are available on request. Proceeds from the 50/50 drawing will be used to help pay for entertainment and hospitality room expenses.

Patrol Gunboat Association

1998 Patrol Gunboat Reunion Itinerary

Wednesday, August 12, 1998

- 12:00 Hospitality Room opens and remains open until noon, Sunday.
- 2:00 Arrival and Registration until 7:00 pm, dinner and evening on your own.

Thursday, August 13, 1998

- 8:30 Registration continues until 9:30.
- 10:00 Board bus for the George L. Luthey Memorial Botanical Gardens. Stroll among four acres of landscaped grounds featuring herbs, perennials, a woodland shade garden and a wildlife garden with pond. Don't forget to see the award winning rose gardens which contain over 800 hybrid tea roses. An extensive collection of rainforest plants along with seasonal flower shows is housed inside the garden conservatory.
- 11:15 Reboard bus for lunch at the Old Country Buffet.
- 1:00 Reboard bus for the Illinois Antique Center, named one of the country's top ten of it's kind. Truly a unique shopping experience, the center occupies a renovated turn of the century warehouse situated on Peoria's riverfront. Inside, over 230 dealers offer real antiques and collectibles. Since no crafts or reproductions are allowed, every item is a treasure. Bring your walking shoes and don't forget to see the upstairs.
- 3:30 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 3:45.

Tour price \$26.00/person, includes transportation, escort and lunch.

Dinner and evening on your own. Registration schedule will be posted.

Friday, August 14, 1998

- 8:45 Board bus to explore the first European settlement in Illinois. As you ride through the city's three historic districts, you'll learn about the varied cultures that made this charming city. From the early influences of the Native Americans through it's years as a proud French settlement, to becoming Whiskey Capitol of the U.S., Peoria has always been a "land of great abundance". Other sites along the way include Grandview Drive, called the "world's most beautiful drive" by Teddy Roosevelt, the downtown and riverfront areas, and a stop at one of Peoria's historic homes.
- 11:15 Arrive at the River Station Restaurant for lunch. Enjoy a delicious meal of lemon herb chicken, fresh baked bread, garden salad, rice and desert.
- 12:45 Reboard bus for Wheels O' Time Museum.
- 1:15 Arrive at the museum to view a fascinating collection of items from days gone by. Displays include everything from vintage automobiles to antique musical instruments. Other exhibits feature toys, bicycles, "Grandma's Kitchen" and a replica of an early 20th century firehouse complete with a City of Peoria Fire Pumper" from 1855.
- 2:45 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 3:15.

Tour price \$42.00/person, includes transportation, guide, lunch and admissions.

Registration schedule will be posted in Hospitality Room.

- 6:00 Attitude adjustment hour / cash bar.
- 7:00 Friday Night Buffet Dinner, followed by entertainment.

Saturday, August 15, 1998

- 8:30 Business meeting until 9:30.
Registration schedule will be posted in Hospitality Room.
- 12:30 Board bus for Wildlife Prairie Park.
- 1:00 Arrive at park. Named one of the nation's premier wildlife parks, this 2,000 acre facility houses a wide variety of animals native to Illinois. You'll see wolves, cougars, elk, bison and much more as you stroll through the natural setting. Other exhibits include a restored prairie, museum and butterfly garden.
- 3:00 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 3:30.

Tour price \$16.00/person, includes transportation, escort and admission.

- 6:00 Attitude adjustment hour / cash bar.
- 7:00 First annual Patrol Gunboat Reunion Banquet Dinner, followed by raffle ticket drawing.
- 9:00 Drawing of 50/50 ticket winners. Entertainment and dancing.

Sunday, August 16, 1998

- Farewells and Departures.
- 12:00 Hospitality Room closes.

Patrol Gunboat Association

HOLIDAY INN CITY CENTRE PEORIA, IL. (309) 674-2500

HOTEL LOCATION

The Holiday Inn City Centre is located at 500 Hamilton Boulevard, Peoria, IL 61602. The hotel is convenient to the Peoria Civic Center, the Caterpillar World Headquarters, and just 8 miles from the Greater Peoria airport.

Directions if driving:

- From I-74 east, take the Glendale Exit (92). Turn *left* off the exit onto Fayette Street. Go straight and turn *right* at the 3rd set of stoplights (Madison Street). The hotel will be on your right.

- From I-55 (St. Louis). Take I-55 north to I-155 north to I-74 west. Continue on I-74 west to Peoria. Take the Jefferson Street exit (93A). (Jefferson Street is one-way) Go to the 2nd stoplight and turn *right* onto Hamilton Boulevard. The hotel is one block further on the right.

- From I-55 (Chicago). Take I-55 south to I-74 west. Continue on I-74 west to Peoria. Take the Jefferson Street exit (93A). (Jefferson Street is one-way) Go to the 2nd stoplight and turn *right* onto Hamilton Boulevard. The hotel is one block further on the right.

HOTEL EXTRAS

The Holiday Inn City Centre has 286 guest rooms. Rooms are furnished with remote control color TV and a coffee maker. The hotel features an outdoor pool, barber/beauty shop, a "state of the art" fitness center, Bonnie's Gift Shop and Balanced Health Concepts (featuring therapeutic massages).

Handicapped accessible and nonsmoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservation. Covered parking is complimentary to all hotel guests. RV's can be parked across the street; the hotel will reimburse you for your parking charge with a parking receipt. Check in time is 3pm; check out is 12 noon.

HOTEL DINING

- ***Raintree Restaurant*** serves breakfast from 6am - 11am; lunch 11am - 2pm; dinner 5pm - 10pm.
- ***Regency Lounge*** is available for cocktails. Hours are 5pm - midnight, Monday - Saturday.
- ***Bleachers*** also features sandwiches and drinks. Hours are 11am - midnight, Monday - Saturday.
- ***Dominic's Pizza*** can be ordered in any of the hotel's dining facilities or through room service.
- Room service is available from 6am - 10pm.

AIRPORT SHUTTLE

The hotel provides complimentary airport transportation to and from the Greater Peoria Airport. Simply call the hotel from the courtesy phone located in the baggage claim area of the airport for pickup.

WHEELCHAIRS

Smith's Surgical Supply (309) 685-5221 rents standard wheelchairs for \$15.00/week. They are located less than two miles from the hotel and will deliver the chair at no charge. Call ahead if you want to reserve a chair.