

# PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

## GUNBOAT RIDERS

<http://gunboatriders.com>  
<http://www.onelist.com/community/gunboats>  
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## 2001 REUNION SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

### 2001 REUNION

The 2001 Patrol Gunboat Reunion was held in San Diego, California, at the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel from August 8 - 12, 2001. Nancy and I arrived on Tuesday and like every year, spent the day unpacking and unloading all the goodies. Since we were on the West Coast this year, we went ahead and shipped the majority to the hotel. The coffee mugs were shipped direct from the manufacturer as were the foam Koozies that we gave away at registration. The photo albums and newsletter binders were shipped to Paul McGurgan for storage and delivery when we arrived. Paul, along with Carl Little and Dave Donaldson spent many hours helping arrange the display area of the hospitality room.

This is the first year that we didn't have a banquet room for our Hospitality Room. The Hanalei provided us with a two room poolside suite for hospitality. As always, we needed a registration area for checking in, Ballcaps and other giveaways, information and of course hugs and handshakes. The registration area took up half of one room, chips, pretzels and snacks along with the beer took up the other half. One bathtub was for soft drinks (imagine that, using a bath tub to keep the drinks cold) and the remainder of that bathroom was used for storage. In the other room, we had the furniture removed and set up tables for Dave Donaldson's impressive display of memorabilia.

And then, there was the ship. With a few strings being pulled by Admiral Rempt, we were fortunate enough to have a scale model of the USS ASHEVILLE (PG-84) on display during the reunion. This model was provided to us by COMNAVSURFPAC. I had made contact earlier with the bureau and asked about the possibility of acquiring this model for the reunion and was informed that these items were never loaned out for functions such as a reunion. I was aware that the Asheville model was located in San Diego and that it was in the lobby at COMNAVSURFPAC. I had completely given up hope when a member of Admiral Rempt's staff contacted me and said that it could be arranged if we wanted it. So, to make a long story shorter, we did manage to have

the model on display at the hotel.

Carl Little picked up the model of the Asheville from the Naval Base and delivered it Wednesday morning. Shortly after that, Paul McGurgan arrived with the boxes that we had shipped to him several weeks earlier., mostly administrative items and more memorabilia for



the Hospitality Room. Carl, Paul and Nancy spent most of the morning preparing the Hospitality Room for the first arrivals, we were scheduled to open at noon. While they were preparing the Hospitality Room, I headed for my 10:00 appointment with the sales manager and hotel staff.

### Pre-Con Meeting.....

Each year just prior to the start of the reunion we have a "Pre-Con" or Pre Convention meeting with the hotel staff. The hotel arranges for us to meet each of the management personnel who are responsible for the events that we will be having. At the Pre-Con meeting, we meet the Catering Staff, who would be responsible for the Buffet and Banquet dinners, the Registration Desk Manager, responsible for checking in each of our members, the hotel bar manager, housekeeping, audio visual personnel, maintenance, all the folks at the hotel who were responsible for making our reunion a success. It is at this meeting that we discuss any possible problems that may come up during the reunion. This year for example, we discussed the fact that in the contract, I set the banquet total at between 120 and 130. I arrived at this total based on the responses from the Survey that we had mailed to each member of the Association. To the total number of responses, I added several to accommodate for new members, and factored in additional guests based on the number of people that I figured would attend without sending back their survey. My estimate was based on the results of the three previous reunions.



# Patrol Gunboat Association



## Our One Major Glitch.....

Let me first mention that when a problem comes up at the reunion, we all work to solve the problem. If the problem is a result of a mistake made by the hotel, I think it is natural to make certain that the sales manager is aware of the fact that the problem is due to an error on their part. The first major glitch however, was due to an error on my part. We ran into a major problem when the total number of guests for the Banquet Dinner hit one hundred seventy.. The room reserved for the banquet was sufficient to seat one hundred forty at round tables of eight, with enough room for the dance floor and the band. With one hundred seventy guests, the dance floor had to be relocated to the other side of the room, tables had to be set up on the dance floor and then moved after dinner. The height of the ceiling and the location of the ceiling fixtures prohibited the color guard from parading the colors to the head table, so the color guard had to change their program and parade the colors toward the dance floor. The additional number of guests meant that we would have to seat ten at each table instead of eight, and that we would need two additional tables. It was a small problem, it was easily solved, but it was avoidable. I use the survey to assist in making arrangements for the reunion, it is an important tool and it is essential to making each reunion a success.

## I like beer.....

Each year we arrange to have beer on draft in the hospitality room. We also arrange to have non alcoholic beverages available to the members as well as chips, pretzels, crackers and other snacks to munch on in the hospitality room. For the snacks and soft drinks, we usually go out Tuesday or early Wednesday and purchase what we need at a local Sam's Club or Price Club. For the beer, the hotel has always taken care of the keg beer for us. Their price is high, but then they are also responsible for the ice and putting on the new kegs when required. This year, the Hanalei advised us that we needed to arrange for the beer on our own. So, we had a local beer distributor deliver three kegs of beer and rented a tap, a tub to keep it in and purchased cups for the Hospitality Room. It worked out well, and actually saved us quite a bit of money too.



As far as I am concerned, the Hospitality Room is the center of the reunion. It is where everyone congregates when there is nothing scheduled for us to do as a group. Having a poolside suite was interesting however the lack of security made it difficult. We didn't want to lock the doors at night so that the late crowd would still be able to use it. At the same time, we didn't want to risk having unauthorized visitors in the suite either. The compromise was to lock up the display area with the raffle table items, the model of the Asheville, the books and other display items at night and still keep the refreshment and registration area open. Another problem we ran into was when the hospitality room was full, the members tended to gather outside on the lawn. Since we were only one of several suites, we ran the risk of bothering some of the other hotel guests. While it worked out satisfactorily, I hope that we don't have to do Hospitality this way again.

## Thursday, our first tour of San Diego.....

Each year I try to arrange for tours during the reunion. I arrange these tours with a local tour agency and require them to provide air conditioned motor coaches and a guide at all times. Our Thursday trip started off with a guided tour of the City of San Diego. We visited Point Loma and La Jolla. We saw a terrific view of the city from the Cabrillo National Park. After a short stop at Shelter Island and the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, we headed to Seaport Village to shop and eat lunch. Before heading back to the hotel, we drove through the City of Coronado and the famous Gaslamp Quarter as well as a drive along Silver Strand Beach, home of Navy Seal Team Training.

## Friday, more tours and a great meal.....

The first stop on our Friday tour was the Veterans Memorial Museum. For our Vietnam Veterans it was a touching experience. The City of San Diego has gone all out in making this museum an excellent display of artifacts from Vietnam. There were uniforms from each of the branches of the service as well as uniforms from many of the other countries that were involved in the Vietnam conflict. It was hard to keep our schedule as many of our members remained longer than we had planned. The miniature replica of the Vietnam Memorial is as awe inspiring as the original in Washington DC. After leaving the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, we headed to Balboa Park and a stop at the Aerospace Museum. Our last stop was San Diego's famous "Old Town". Lunch at many of the fine Mexican Restaurants and shopping occupied most of the remainder of our trip. By four o'clock we were back at the hotel and getting ready for the Buffet Dinner.

At six o'clock, the hotel bar opened and members started to gather for drinks and conversation. Dinner was served promptly at seven. We normally do not arrange for any entertainment at the Buffet, we prefer to entertain ourselves and so far that has worked out quite well. This year, I decided to arrange for a podium and microphone so that following dinner we could have several members get up and tell the group what their attendance at the reunion has meant to them. What I was looking for is some insight into how their coming to these reunions has affected their outlook on life. I thought it would also be interesting to hear about some of the new friendships that have developed between new and old shipmates. What we got was.....

*sea stories, lots and lots of wonderful sea stories.... Sailors!*

## Saturday, Business Meeting, Tour, Banquet, Dancing.....

The annual business meeting was called to order by Terry McManuels at 9:00 AM on Saturday, August 11, 2001. The following statistics were presented to the members in attendance. As of July 30, 2001, there were 2,061 names in the Association data file. Of these, 784 were listed as regular members with a valid mailing address. Of the 784 regular members in the file, some are duplicate names such as those shipmates who served on more than one Patrol Gunboat.

# Patrol Gunboat Association



The data file holds the names of 26 deceased crewmembers. (Included are those who died while attached to one of the ships.) Of the 26 deceased crewmembers, 4 have families who desire to be kept informed

of all Association activities and wish to remain active and on the Association Mailing list. They receive all Association Newsletters and other correspondence. These members do not pay dues and receive an invitation to all reunions and other Association functions. There are an additional 22 deceased crewmembers who have been identified whose families have not been located or contacted, or, have been contacted and prefer to not to receive information about our Association or receive our newsletter.

The membership present was reminded about Association Dues, and agreed that dues should remain at \$20.00 per year. For the benefit of our new members, I will again quickly cover our membership structure.

**Member Status "RP"** - Those members who have responded to the membership dues request and are current with their annual dues. These members will receive all Newsletters and other correspondence regarding Association activities.

**Member Status "RNP"** - Those members who have not responded to the membership dues request. These members receive only the Pre-Reunion and Post Reunion Newsletters. The Pre-Reunion Newsletter is published in March and includes all registration forms and other items required to register for the reunion. The Post Reunion Newsletter comes out shortly after the reunion and it gives a rundown of the events and highlights of the reunion.

**Member Status "M"** - Status "M" which is the "MISSING PERSONS" list.

**Member Status "D"** - Status "D" which is our deceased shipmates. I would appreciate your input regarding crewmembers who have passed away. As you may have noticed, we have a column in the Newsletter called "Supreme Commander". In it, we share the information on our departed shipmates.

Other items that were discussed included the location of the 2002 Reunion as well as Association Finances, Officers and the events we schedule at each reunion. Mr. McManuels reminded the membership or the importance of filling out and returning the Reunion Survey as well as the need to make reservations early. A motion was then made and carried that we adjourn the 2001 business meeting.

Following the Business Meeting we had about an hour of free time before we departed for the Saturday San Diego Harbor Cruise. Our narrator for the cruise was a retired Navy Boatswain Mate. Our cruise included a harbor tour of the San Diego Naval Station with a close look at the ships that were in port at the time. Along with being quite knowledgeable about the ships present, he was also very entertaining. Following the Harbor Cruise, we toured the Star of India and the San Diego Maritime Museum.

After returning to the hotel, we had about an hour before the Banquet Dinner Program started. Refreshments were available at the bar starting at 6:00 PM and the Banquet Hall opened at 7:00. Howard Wick presided over the Banquet Dinner. Following dinner, we held the annual 50-50 drawing. The winners of this year's drawing were:

**First Place: James Zimmerman, USS Crockett \$508.75**  
**Second Place: James Thomas, USS Asheville \$305.25**  
**Third Place: Howard Wick, USS Crockett \$203.50**

This year only one of the winners was not present. James Zimmerman had his check mailed to him when we returned from San Diego. Prior to the drawing, Paul McGurgan (PG-88) offered to exchange a pair of plane tickets to the next reunion from his frequent flyer pool to any 50-50 winner present who would donate his or her check back to the Association. James Thomas took him up on his offer and will receive tickets from his home in Moncks Corner, SC to Chicago for the 2002 Reunion. Howard Wick then donated his check back to the Association as well, making this without a doubt the most successful drawing we have ever had. I want to say a special thank you to Jim, Paul and Howard as well as all who purchased tickets because, without these funds, it would be difficult to put on a quality reunion.

We will again have a 50 - 50 drawing at the 2002 Reunion. There are twelve 50 - 50 tickets included with this newsletter for the drawing that will be held following the Banquet Dinner in Chicago. Help support a growing Association by purchasing at least twelve tickets. You may do so, at any time, by sending me a check or money order for the desired number of tickets along with sufficient address labels for me to place on them. Tickets will again be \$10.00 for twelve tickets or \$1.00 each. Make your check or money order payable to the Patrol Gunboat Reunion Association. **Remember, the winners need not be present at the drawing.**

At our first reunion we tried to get a good variety of items for on the raffle table. Unfortunately, our mistake was getting too many items. The raffle table drawing took so long that it cut into the bands playing time. Since we pay the band by the hour from an agreed upon start time, we have tried to have better, albeit fewer items on the raffle table. This year raffle table items included two hand made quilts donated to the association for the raffle. There also was a one night free stay and a two night free stay at the 2002 reunion in Chicago. As usual, we had a Lone Sailor, a luggage set, a free annual membership along with several other items. We managed to get the raffle drawing done in short order move on to the remainder of the evenings festivities.

After the raffle table drawing, we were entertained with music from Dave Kendall and The Late Edition. It was a busy week for all. I do hope that everyone who attended enjoyed the reunion as much as I did. Sunday brought the hugs and handshakes, and the promises to meet again next year. As I close up this edition of Gunboat Riders, I would like to leave you with this thought. Shortly after we returned from San Diego I sent an e-mail message to an old shipmate of mine from Canon. I had mentioned to him that I was disappointed that he was unable to attend, particularly since he lived so close to the San Diego area. On Thursday, September 20, I received the following message from Stan Ray (PG-90):

*"Mac, I would have loved to have been there, I love the San Diego area. I keep up with what's going on with the organization and very much enjoy the links that the guys post on onelist. I keep saying that one of these years I will go to one of the reunions, but something always gets in the way, my business, family or just going to northern Michigan for an extended stay. But with the events that took place on September 11, I may not put off doing those things that I say I will do someday."*

Sunday morning, as the bellman was loading cars and folks were checking out, many were relaxing in the Hospitality Room discussing plans to once again meet at the next reunion. Lots of hand shakes and hugs, and lots of people saying:

**SEE YOU IN CHICAGO!**

# Patrol Gunboat Association

## SAN DIEGO REUNION SURVEY

I would again like to explain a bit about the Reunion survey and the reason it is so important. First off, as I have said numerous times, it is just a survey, a tool that is used to assist in determining transportation requirements for the tours, how many tour guides and escorts we will need, where we will be able to arrange meals during the tours and a myriad of other details. This survey is our only way to gauge, in advance, how successful a reunion might be. The final negotiated room rate is dependent on the number of guests who will be staying at the hotel. The cost of the meals at the hotel and the final cost for all tours is determined by the anticipated number of participants. In short, the data gathered from the survey is essential to the efficient and cost effective arrangement of virtually every event during the reunion.

I averaged the results of our three previous reunions and developed a formula to compute a ratio of positive responses to actual attendees. I used this ratio to determine what we could expect for participation at the 2001. Reunion and signed the contracts based on the results. This past year, out of 719 Survey's mailed, I received a total of 114 responses. Of those, 85 indicated that they planned to attend the San Diego Reunion. There were 21 crewmembers who were 100% sure that they would attend, 24 who were 75% certain and 40 who were 50% certain that they would attend. Using the data from the previous reunion surveys, we should have had an estimated 38 former crewmembers plus their guests in attendance in 2001. Next I factored in the number of attendees who came to Peoria, Falls Church and Saint Louis without submitting a survey and used those figures to make plans for this years reunion. This year, we had 19 former crewmembers show up with out submitting a reunion survey.

Last year, we had problems with the advance room block at the hotel. I computed the required room block based on the results of the survey. The problem is that we can be penalized for failing to meet our room block, and the hotel can also refuse to honor the

group rate when we exceed the guaranteed block. There is some flexibility here when we need to increase the block a couple months before the reunion, but when we are asking for additional rooms at the group rate after the cutoff date, many hotels are reluctant to agree. This year we blocked 180 paid nights and at the cutoff we were at less than eight five percent of our block. Last minute reservations took us over the top and we had no penalties for failing to meet the required number of rooms. We did an excellent job of meeting the requirements this year. If there is any area where we can do better, it would be for me to get a better understanding of the number of local members who show up unexpectedly. This was the primary reason for the Banquet Dinner count going so far above what I had figured on. Just remember, even though there is a penalty assessed to the Association for late cancellations, we have always provided a full refund to those who have to cancel. There is simply no reason not to make advance reservations with the hotel. If there are any penalties, the Association will absorb them out of our funds. In the past, I have tried to make this clear to everyone, yet again this year we had at least one crewmember show up at the hotel without making advance reservations. The result, he ended up staying at a different hotel at a higher rate. As far as I am aware, this was the only instance where I wasn't able to get the rate reduced to our group rate for the entire reunion. The bottom line here is, make your reservations early. When three people show up at the hotel and there is only one room left, the hotel will charge the highest rate it can. Remember my favorite quote, "It's just business".

Simply put, I cannot over emphasize the importance of the Reunion Survey. Please try to have it completed and returned to me by November 30, 2001. This will make planning the 2002 Chicago much easier and result in a better Reunion for everyone.

## **IT'S A SURVEY, NOT A COMMITMENT!**

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## LOOK WHO CAME TO DINNER

The following former crewmembers joined us at the 2001 Patrol Gunboat Association Reunion in San Diego, California

Rudy Arguilla, Crockett  
Larry Ashem, Grand Rapids  
John Barrett, Welch  
Paul Bennett, Crockett  
Leroy Blankenship, Antelope  
Brian Boortz, Ready  
Anthony Braunek, Antelope  
Robert Brown, Antelope  
James Burke, Antelope  
Albert Butler, Marathon  
James Campanella, Grand Rapids  
Homer Darrow, Defiance  
James Davies, Gallup  
David Donaldson, CCR-3  
Rex Downing, Ready  
James Eaton, Surprise  
Terrence Eccleston, Tacoma  
Edward Enlow, Green Bay  
Fred Frailey, Marathon

Michael Freeman, Crockett  
Timothy French, Asheville  
Bill Funk, Grand Rapids  
Kurt Hauge, Marathon  
Albert Havranek, Antelope  
Thomas Hayden, Marathon  
Paul Heebner, Beacon  
George Ingram, Crockett  
Daniel Jacobson, Antelope  
William Joseph, Ready  
Michael Kaprielian, Antelope  
Steven Kopp, Benicia  
John Kost, Defiance  
Mikel Lander, Ready  
Harold Lankford, Surprise  
Carl Little, Beacon  
Royal Magnus, Tacoma  
Daniel McGowan, Asheville  
Paul McGurgan, Crockett

Terry McManuels, Canon  
Gary Metoxen, Gallup  
Albert Minzer, Tacoma  
Robert Mitchell, Asheville  
Valentin Monsale, Defiance  
Steve Moor, Antelope  
Steven Moore, Tacoma  
Charles Moran, Green Bay  
David Nekola, Canon  
Ernest Patterson, Chehalis  
Joseph Patton, Ready  
Robert Peters, Crockett  
Frank Phelps, Marathon  
John Pletsch, Crockett  
William Powell, Antelope  
Richard Ranson, Surprise  
Gene Razzetti, Crockett  
Wesley Ronk, Antelope  
John Ross, Welch

Ron Ruggiero, Marathon  
Roy russell, Grand Rapids  
Charles Schmidt, Gallup  
Martin Schoonderwoerd, Canon  
James Showalter, Antelope  
Paul Souval, Ready  
Bobby Strozier, Surprise  
Frank Struse, Ready  
Terry Southerland, Asheville  
James Thomas, Asheville  
Michael Tobin, Surprise  
Edward Vacin, Ready  
Joel Walker, Ready  
Dan Watson, Canon  
Gary Wentworth, Antelope  
Dale Westby, Defiance  
Howard Wick, Crockett  
William Wilborn, Ready  
Randy Wilke, Gallup  
Ronald Young, Tacoma