

PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

GUNBOAT RIDERS

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2004, CONCORD CALIFORNIA

Well, here we are again, time to let you know where we will be headed next. Considering what a huge success the 2001 San Diego reunion was, we thought it might be time to try another west coast reunion. Our first thoughts were to try for San Francisco. As usual, we contacted the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau and requested information from some of the major convention hotels and local tour companies. Remembering that the room rate in San Diego was \$109.00, and we negotiated for months to get that, I was apprehensive about the San Francisco proposals from the beginning.

My concern was well founded. Most of the proposals came in with room rates between \$110.00 and \$150.00 per night with very few concessions. I spend several weeks trying to negotiate the rates down to under \$100.00 to no avail. Then I received an email from Caroline Prescott-Clark at the Contra Costa County Convention and Visitors Bureau. She convinced me to consider Concord and see what they had to offer.

So, I told her to contact several hotels in the area and see what they were willing to do for us. Soon the proposals started to come in and I must say, I was really surprised. So, Nancy and I headed to Concord and spent a week there looking at several hotels.

And the winner is.....

The Holiday Inn Concord will host the 2004 Patrol Gunboat Association Reunion from August 04 to August 08, 2004.



As always, my priority in selecting a hotel has been the enthusiasm and professionalism of the staff and the condition of the property. I also wanted to keep the 2004 room rate as low as possible so as many crewmembers as possible would be able to afford to attend. While the Holiday Inn Concord is an older property, it is well maintained and the staff there is as professional and enthusiastic as any I have worked with in the past. The lobby area is impressive, it is clean and well lit with plenty of room to sit and relax while you wait for friends to arrive. The sleeping rooms are also clean and spacious with all of the amenities you would



expect from a fine hotel.

Following my return from Concord, it was time to spend some time negotiating with the Holiday Inn. I won't bore you with the specifics of the negotiation process, but suffice to say, the Holiday Inn is anxious to host our 2004 reunion. Our special group rate is \$83.00 per night, single, double, triple, quad. This rate is good from three days prior until three days after the reunion for those who wish to come early or stay late. On March 13, 2003 I signed a contract with the Holiday Inn Concord for our 2004 reunion. Our guaranteed room block is 210 room nights from Wednesday, August 04 through Sunday, August 08, 2004.

The hotel has agreed to provide our required complimentary rooms for raffle table prizes as well as a complimentary hospitality room from Wednesday through Sunday. The Holiday Inn also agreed to provide a

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complimentary Wine and Cheese Reception for up to sixty people on



Wednesday, August 4, 2004. Our Buffet and Banquet Dinner prices are within our usual range, not to exceed \$31.00 for an adult buffet dinner and not to exceed \$30.00 per adult for the Banquet Dinner.

Our itinerary will be the same as in previous years, Wednesday will be an early check in day with the Wine and Cheese Reception that evening.



Thursday will include an all day tour; Friday will include a full day tour and the Friday Night Buffet Dinner. Saturday morning we will again have a business meeting in the morning followed by a short afternoon tour. Saturday evening will be the Banquet Dinner followed by live entertainment. Sunday morning will be farewells until the 2005 reunion.

As always, I have included a Reunion Survey Sheet in the Post Reunion Insert that will help me plan the reunion. Please fill out and return this Survey Sheet at your earliest convenience.

ASSOCIATION DUES

Be sure to see the note regarding membership dues. It is on page 4 of the Post Reunion Edition of Gunboat Riders Newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS IN FILE

Following is a list of new members that have been located since the last newsletter was published.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Ship</u>	<u>Contacted</u>
Alton, Lester D.	Graham County	10/08/2003
Anderson, Eugene	Gallup	09/09/2003
Carlin, Patrick A.	Green Bay	08/12/2003
Crader, John	Chehalis	07/16/2003
Crader, Roy	Chehalis	07/16/2003
Dietrich, Lynn C.	Marathon	10/08/2003
Ellis, Steve	Benicia, Antelope	07/17/2003
Getsinger, Ron	Welch	06/27/2003
Gibbs, Alan N.	Gallup	10/10/2003
Gillmore, Michael S.	Grand Rapids	07/15/2003
Kanne, Charles F.	COSRON THREE, COSDIV 32	06/16/2003
Kern, Jim M.	Beacon	07/24/2003
Long, Keith D.	Welch	07/07/2003
Mejia, George E.	Gallup	07/02/2003
Miller, John G.	Benicia	09/09/2003
Newville, Dennis G.	Benicia, Marathon	07/30/2003
Parker, Arthur T.	Crockett	09/02/2003
Pool, Joe B.	Ready, Chehalis	09/02/2003
Reyes, Richard G.	Surprise	06/18/2003
Rutledge, Ricky	Tacoma	10/08/2003
Tovar, Edmond P.	Canon	06/15/2003

2003 50 - 50 WINNERS

We had another great year for the 50 - 50 drawing. The best part is that this year we had some of the winners present at the banquet to receive their checks. As you know, the money we generate from this program is essential to the Association for us to be able to pay for reunion expenses such as Hospitality Room refreshments, raffle table items and entertainment after the Saturday Night Banquet. Half of the money received from the sale of 50 - 50 tickets is awarded to the three lucky winners. Fifty percent of the prize money goes to the first place winner, thirty percent to the second place winner and twenty percent to the third place winner. The remaining half of the money generated is kept by the Association for reunion related expenses.

Each crew member receives 12 tickets, these tickets are included in one of the Association Newsletters. Those who want to participate need only fill out the ticket stubs and return them to me along with a check for \$1.00 for one ticket, or \$10.00 for 12 tickets. We continue to sell 50 - 50 tickets throughout the year and at the reunion up until the start of the Banquet Dinner on Saturday night. Right after the Banquet Dinner, we draw the three lucky tickets and announce the winners.

This year we sold exactly \$1500.00 in 50 - 50 tickets. Of this, \$750.00 was distributed as prizes and an equal amount is kept by the Association. The winners of the 2002 50 - 50 drawing were:

First Place: Tony Brauneck, USS Ready \$375.00
Second Place: Bill Spane, USS Gallup \$225.00
Third Place: Richard Johannsen, USS Tacoma \$150.00

Patrol Gunboat Association

WHY AUGUST?

Back in 1997 when I first came up with the idea of having an annual reunion for the Patrol Gunboats, one of the decisions I had to make was when to hold it. I selected August for several reasons.

First, I figured that many of the members may still have children in school and August seemed like the best month to have the reunion without interfering with the school year.

The second reason I decided on August was because based on the information I had at the time, August was one of the more under utilized months in the reunion industry, therefore one of the least expensive months for reunions at many hotels. We have held six reunions so far, number seven will be in August in Concord, California and number eight is in the planning stages already.

What I am interested in doing at this time is getting an idea of where the membership stands as far as a preferred month for our reunions. I believe that it is best to make it the same time frame each year, that helps members to plan. If the general consensus is to continue to hold our reunions in August, that's fine with me. If there is another month that the majority of the members prefer, then please let me know. I have included a block for you to enter your preferences on the 2004 survey sheet. Just remember that this is not for the 2004 Concord reunion, it is for those reunions after Concord.

BAD JUDGEMENT, MY FAULT

Every year when we arrive at the hotel to get things started, we do a pre-convention (PRE-CON) meeting with the hotel staff. One person who is always there is the person in charge of hotel security.

Each year we inform the hotel that the hospitality room will open at noon on Wednesday and remain open twenty four hours per day until the end of the reunion. We insist that the doors remain unlocked at all times. And each year we meet substantial resistance from hotel security.

If you have attended a reunion in the past, you know that our historian, Dave Donaldson, puts up his display of Gunboat related items for all to see and enjoy. Dave has this incredible display available in the hospitality room from the start of the reunion until the end. And, each year, the hotel security staff tells me in advance that they would not be responsible for these items unless I have them locked up when the hospitality room closes. And every year I remind them that the hospitality room does not close..... Period.....

Well, we seem to have paid for my bad judgement. Apparently late Friday night at the reunion someone removed many of the raffle table items from the hospitality room along with several items that were left for us by Ed Reynolds from K&E Crafts. For that reason I have had to replace some of the items. It wasn't difficult, simply a matter of buying replacements. What really upsets me is that one of our shipmates lost his personal ship's plaque. For that I am truly sorry.

That said, in the future, I will make certain that all items are removed from the hospitality room when we leave for the night. Then the doors can still remain open and you can enjoy free snacks and beverages whenever you want.

INNER PEACE

I have heard it said that one way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you've started."

I looked around to see all the things I started and hadn't finished. So, today I have finished one bottle of white wine, a bottle of red wine, a bottle of Drambuie, my Prozac, a large box of chocolate and a quart of beer. You have no idea how good I feel.

You may pass this on to those you feel are in need of Inner Peace. Have a marvelous day.

2003 BALLCAPS AND COFFEE MUGS

As always, I ordered ball caps from Eagle Crest INC. in Jacksonville, Florida again this year. These are custom embroidered, "Made in America" ball caps, identical in quality to the ones ordered by the Navy Exchange for ships and shore commands. Each crew member who purchased \$20.00 in Raffle Table Tickets during the reunion received a free ball cap. And, this year we tried something new. We had one case of hats made in white and they went really well. Additionally, everyone who registered at the reunion received a commemorative Patrol Gunboat Association 2003 Coffee Mug.

We still have a number of ballcaps from previous years available for those who want to have a complete set. I will say that I have gotten much better at ordering them so, there are very few left over from Valley Forge, and most of those are in blue. For those of you who want to own a complete set from each reunion, we will be selling them until they are all gone. Hats and mug sets for all reunions up to and including 2001 are available for \$16.00, which includes shipping. The 2002 and 2003 Mug and Cap set is \$25.00 which also includes shipping. I have changed the pricing since the post office now has variable rates for priority mail shipping. This way the postage is already figured into the price.



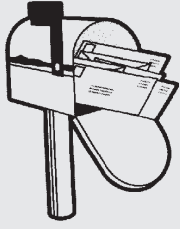
LUCK OF THE IRISH

An Irishman had been drinking at a pub all night. The bartender finally said that the bar is closing. So the Irishman stood up to leave and fell flat on his face. He tried to stand one more time; same result. He figured he would crawl outside and get some fresh air and maybe that would sober him up.

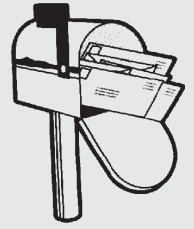
Once outside, he stood up and fell on his face again. So he decided to crawl the four blocks home. When he arrived at the door he stood up and fell flat on his face. He crawled through the door and into his bedroom. When he reached his bed he tried one more time to stand up. This time he managed to pull himself upright, but he quickly fell right into the bed and sound asleep as soon as his head hit the pillow.

He was awakened the next morning to his wife standing over him, shouting, "SO YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING AGAIN!" Putting on an innocent look, and intent on bluffing it out he said, "What makes you say that?" "The pub just called; you left your wheelchair there again."

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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 Howard Wick {PG-88}:** Pam really wanted to go because she hasn't been to Valley Forge or any of the other nice locations in PA before... but, we'll be in Oakland next year.

☐ **From Shipmate Jim Ayers {PG-99}:** We will be thanking of all of you and hope that you have a wonderful time. We are planing on seeing you next year. It will be our first reunion after I retire with my 42 years.

SHIRTS AND SHIPS PATCHES

Sales of Association Golf Shirts has been great. When I placed the order for our hats this year I also ordered Jerzees short sleeved golf shirts. I got them in red, white and blue, all with pockets. Above the pocket in gold lettering are the words Patrol Gunboat Association, and below that is an embroidered image of one of the gunboats. I sold them up until just before the reunion, then I placed another order and took about three dozen along to Valley Forge. The went fairly fast at the reunion, so I should be placing another order soon. The cost of the shirts is \$22.00 each for small, medium, large and extra large. Extra extra large shirts are \$24.00 each. Postage to mail the shirts is \$2.00 for one shirt, \$3.50 for two shirts.

I also want to remind you about the Ship's Patches that we ordered from Eagle Crest. So far, we have patches for Tacoma, Crockett and Gallup only. Keep in mind that there is a minimum order of 50 patches for each ship and that they run close to \$500.00 per patch for each one. I selected the three patches based on the number of members we have for each ship. That means that ships such as Benicia and Surprise, which have very few members will likely be the last ships that we will have patches made for. As we sell more of the patches that we already have, we will use those funds to pay for additional patches.



Initially we sold the patches for \$10.00 each, and the Association took care of the postage. Due to the high amount of interest in getting more patches made, I have decided to start selling the patches for \$12.00 each, with the Association still covering postage to mail them. Please do not send me money for any patches that we currently do not have, it makes the bookkeeping a real problem for me. It will just take some time to get the funds necessary to place another order. So, if you want Tacoma, Gallup or Crockett patches, send me a check for the appropriate amount and I will get them to you as soon as possible.

A TRIBUTE TO A SPECIAL SHIPMATE

Some of you have been around since the beginning and know that I had a great deal of help getting this Association started. For those of you who came aboard in the last few years, it is fitting that I acknowledge the assistance and guidance of one particular individual.

Back in 1997 I started out organizing the first ever reunion for the Asheville Patrol Gunboats. At that time I received a great deal of assistance from the Secretary / Treasurer of the USS Canberra (CA-70 / CAG-2) Reunion Association. He assisted me with the purchase of my computer; showed me the many things that can and frequently do go wrong at a reunion, and 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 our press releases, motivated me to get those 630 announcements printed and in the mail; he provided me the program and newsletter templates necessary to make these newsletters come alive. Many of the items that we had at our first reunion were the result of his research and phone calls; the costs of our ball caps was significantly less due to his allowing us to "piggy back" our order onto his and the cost of our giveaway was reduced due to his influence. For his encouragement and guidance, I am truly grateful to my father, Paul D. McManuels Sr. He attended the first four Patrol Gunboat Association reunions and helped me make them a success.

Forgive me for taking a bit of editorial license with your newsletter, I suppose that is one advantage of being the newsletter editor. My father passed away on September 19, 2003. He was a true shipmate, and a great friend.

The Supreme Commander

Following are names of **Patrol Gunboat Shipmates** that have met the Supreme Commander since the last edition of "Gunboat Riders". As this information is made available, I will include it in the following newsletter.

Shipmate:	Ship:	Departed
Paul D. McManuels	USS Canberra (CA-70) Honorary Member	09/19/2003

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POST REUNION EDITION, 2003

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2003 REUNION

VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA

2003 REUNION

The 2003 Patrol Gunboat Reunion was held in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania at the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel from August 20 - August 24, 2003. Nancy and I left Virginia Beach on Friday so that we could spend some time in



Harrisburg, PA and visit family. Monday, we headed to Valley Forge and arrived late that morning. After checking in, we unpacked and made a trip to the old Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Tuesday we spent the day unpacking, and unloading hats, cups, raffle table items and all the other stuff we like to have at the reunion. Many of our reunion supplies are now being shipped via UPS so that helped speed things up a bit since we already had several boxes waiting for us at the hotel. Ed Reynolds from K&E Crafts delivered our coffee cups to the hotel since he planned to be in the area and in fact, planned to spend a day in the hospitality room showing his products and taking orders from the members. Our Historian, Dave Donaldson flew in from the west coast had much of his display delivered to the hotel via UPS also, and his boxes were also waiting for us when we arrived. That afternoon we went shopping for the chips, pretzels, soft drinks and other snacks and refreshments for the Hospitality Room.

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. First thing Wednesday morning we met with the sales staff and key hotel personnel for this meeting. We met the Catering Manager 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 and security personnel, all the folks at the hotel who were responsible for making our reunion a success.

Hospitality Room.....

Following the Pre-Con meeting, it was time to get to work. This year we had a two room pool side meeting room for our hospitality room. This worked

out great since the smokers were able to congregate on the porch area and still enjoy the hospitality room without bothering the nonsmokers. We set up the registration area right inside the door so that everybody had a chance to hear Nancy's pitch for hats and 50-50 tickets when they checked in. They could also pick up their 2003 commemorative coffee mug and other giveaways as well as information about the Valley Forge area. Once people started arriving, Nancy began handing out registration items and much of what we had stored in our room. Our Historian checked in and started setting up his display while I got the snack tables set up and soft drinks on ice. 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. We opened the doors to the Hospitality Room on time and started checking in members at noon.

As always, I want to thank my wife Nancy for all the work she does at the reunion, in particular at registration. She assists me with making certain that your registration packages are complete and error free. When you arrive she takes care of making sure that you are checked in and that you receive your package and goodies. She makes sure that you get an opportunity to purchase raffle table tickets and then get your "Free" ballcap as well as encouraging you to help with the 50 - 50 by purchasing additional tickets for the drawing.

Wednesday, a special treat.....

About six months before the reunion I got a message from one of our members telling me that the USS Canon (PG-90) was currently sitting in front of one of the buildings at the old Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. The purpose of our Monday visit to the shipyard was to make the final arrangements for a visit to the ship.

It all started when I found out that the Canon was in Philadelphia. Until I received that phone call, I thought that Canon was still in Panama City, Florida. After making several calls to the yard, I finally was able to talk to someone in the Inactive Ships office. Philadelphia is now a civilian shipyard and the only thing there that is related to the Navy is the many inactive ships that are tied up. Most are waiting to be scrapped however several are designated for museum transfer or sale. Apparently some group or organization has indicated they want to purchase or take custody of Canon for the purpose of creating a museum piece. To this day I don't know who it is, but their interest means that now a limited amount of funding is available to maintain the ship and prevent it from deteriorating any further.

Over the course of the next several months I talked to so many people, trying to see if there was anyway we could visit the ship during the reunion. I simply couldn't find anyone who was willing to tell me how to make this happen. The closer we got to the reunion, the more frustrated I got. Finally,



I contacted Paul Bennett. I have seen Paul in action, and I figured that if anyone could arrange the visit, Paul could. Additionally, it seemed to me that it would be better for us if Paul started fresh, rather than try to arrange the tour after I had been officially denied permission from whoever was in charge. Several weeks and dozens of email messages later, we managed to get several others involved,

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including people from the Pentagon, Saint Julians Creek, Philadelphia and Norfolk. But, it seemed to me that the project was destined to fail. At that point, I was about ready to call on an old friend, LCDR John McIntyre.

LCDR McIntyre was really a Boatswain's Mate Third Class who I met very early in my career. I really didn't know him that well, we were simply acquaintances. But, the name came to me one day when I was trying to accomplish something, whatever it was is not really important. I assumed that since I am now retired and not subject to recall, there is little chance that the Navy would call me back and prosecute me for things I may or may not have done during my career, but frankly, why chance it. Suffice to say that I managed to accomplish many things with the help of the fictitious LCDR John McIntyre. I simply invented him. With very few exceptions, LCDR McIntyre only got involved in situations where I believe the Navy benefited from his presence. While I was seriously contemplating making use of CDR McIntyre, I received a call from Joe Moore (PG-101). He called to let me know that he had arranged to do a tour of both the outside and the inside of Canon, and that he would be aboard the ship on Thursday.

It has always amazed me how well things work out when you know who to talk to. What was impossible one day was a single phone call away from reality.

After talking with Joe, I just called the Inactive Ships office, got the right person on the phone and arranged for the group to tour the ship on Wednesday afternoon. There were some restrictions however. First off, safety and security dictated that they would only be able to view the ship from the pier, which would be easy to enforce since Canon was just across the street from Inactive ships.



Photo's would be permitted provided they were of the ship only, and photo's of other ships would not be permitted. I arranged for us to visit Wednesday afternoon.

As I was making these arrangements I figured I would ask if perhaps I could come a day early and get a tour of the inside of the ship and take some pictures. I was told that it was normally not permitted. So, I asked when it would be permitted, informing her that I was aware that at least one person was scheduled to visit the ship in the near future, and that the visit would include an inside tour. She told me that I must be talking about a Mr. Moore, and that he represented a city that was interested in perhaps taking custody of the ship for use as a museum piece. His



tour included the inside of the ship since he would need to ascertain the condition of the ship and report back.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. I didn't want to lie to her, and in fact I told her that. But, I said that if a lie would get me aboard, then I would create a story about our group wanting to provide financial assistance to whoever takes custody of the ship. I guess I just sound cute on the phone, she finally agreed to let me tour the ship on Tuesday afternoon. So, at 1:00 PM Tuesday, Nancy and I went aboard and toured the exterior as well as all the inside spaces. Canon is definitely overdue for some paint and preservation. Perhaps I might see if CDR McIntyre can get them to do that. We took a complete tour of the inside spaces, Canon is actually in pretty good shape. I checked for water leakage and found none. While most of the actual equipment is still in the engineering spaces, the majority of the electronics are gone. Both gun mounts are still there, although definitely in need of some old fashioned PMS. I was warned ahead of time not to take any souvenirs so while it was tempting, I left her the way she was when I went aboard.

Our small convoy arrived on Wednesday afternoon. We had about fifteen people who wanted to visit the ship. After checking in with inactive ships, we spent close to an hour standing on the pier looking at the ship, pointing out where we worked, ate and slept. I think all of us felt the same way; what a

sad ending to one of the best classes of ships in Naval history. Our sadness must have been obvious, because shortly after we got there the director of Inactive Ships came out and advised the escort that he could take us aboard in groups of four. All that was necessary is that we wear hard hats and sign a release of liability. All in all, it was an interesting trip for me and the rest of the group. I am certain that everyone who went will be interested in what finally happens to the ship.

Thursday, our first scheduled tour.....

Before I start telling you about the tours, I want to mention that the participation in the tours during the 2003 reunion was excellent. For the first time, we have had to charter a second coach for both Thursday's and Friday's Tours. I can't tell you how pleased I am to see such a great interest in the tours. Thursday morning at 9:00 AM we headed out for a tour of Lancaster and the Amish Country. Our day started with a visit to the Old Order Amish and a stop at the Amish Experience. We saw an excellent presentation called Jacobs Choice where young Jacob was trying to



figure out if he wanted to remain a part of the Amish community or withdraw from the church and live in the modern world. Next, a riding tour of the Back Country, we saw first hand the way the Amish live and cope with their non-Amish neighbors. A stop at a local families home to watch as they work on an authentic quilt. The Amish are famous for their

craftsmanship and a stop at one of their shops shows you why.

By lunch time we were all hungry and it was a good thing. Included in the tour was lunch at the Good 'N' Plenty Restaurant. The food was just as good as I remember it from my last visit, and I assure you, there was plenty of it to go around. After some shopping at the gift shop, we headed back to the bus, all very full and well nourished.

Following lunch we took off to Kitchen Kettle Shopping Village, located in Intercourse, Pennsylvania. While some of our members headed straight for one of the many shops, some of us just sat and relaxed and listened to some of the local musicians as they entertained everyone who was willing to listen. Soon our time was up and we headed back to the busses, arms full of treasures to give out to family and friends when we returned home. Once back at the hotel, we all went straight for the hospitality room where we could relax and enjoy a drink and light snack.

At 6:00 PM the hotel staff showed up with several trays of cheese, chips, dips and of course some pretty tasty wine for those who enjoy it. Part of the contract for this years reunion included a free wine and cheese reception for up to thirty people on Thursday night. When I asked for this, I based the number of participants on the response to the survey. Obviously I missed the numbers a bit, we had sixty plus attend the reception and wound up paying \$11.20 per person for the extra, which worked out to close to \$350.00.

Friday, the Philadelphia and Valley Forge Tour, and of course the Buffet Dinner.....

At 9:00 AM Friday we boarded the bus for the Philadelphia City Tour. I can't tell you what it felt like to me to be walking in the footsteps of our founding fathers. While touring "America's Most Historic Square Mile" we visited the State House of Pennsylvania, also know as Independence Hall where the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were signed. We saw Congress Hall and the Liberty Bell. We saw Elfreth's alley, the Betsy Ross House and were able to tour and sit in the pews of Christ Church, the Anglican church founded in 1695 where many of the founding fathers

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worshipped.

After a long morning, we were ready for lunch, and there were plenty of places to eat at the Reading Terminal. Anyone who has spent time in Philadelphia couldn't resist the chance to have a real Philly Cheese Steak. Of course there was plenty of other things to chose from. The Reading Terminal has several hundred shops and restaurants to visit. We



spent a little over an hour there, but alas, it was time to go. We still had one more major attraction to see before we finished the tour.

Getting back on the bus, most of us were ready for a relaxing ride. After a short drive, we arrived at Valley Forge National Park. What surprises many people is the fact that no battle was ever fought here. Valley Forge was simply a winter camp. We drove through the park and stopped at several of the displays. Our guide, dressed in appropriate attire for the day, gave us some insight as to how life was for the soldiers who lived and died at Valley Forge. Several times during the tour he played his fife to entertain us while we rode. Hearing how good he was, I joked that if he didn't know how to play Anchors Aweigh, then he should assume that there would be no tip for him at the end of the tour. As we departed Valley Forge National Park, he pulled out his fife and played an excellent rendition of Anchors Aweigh. Finally, we were back to the hotel, tired from a long day, but definitely more informed about our countries history.

At 6:00 PM we opened the bar in the foyer to the banquet hall. Dinner followed shortly afterwards. There was plenty to eat and of course, some light entertainment as we introduced new members. Just like last year, we did not arrange for any formal entertainment on Friday night. So, we had each new member come up to the microphone and introduce themselves and tell us a bit about themselves. And, just like last year, what we got was....

lots and lots of sea stories....

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

The annual business meeting was called to order by Terry McManuels at 8:30 AM on Saturday, August 23, 2003. The following statistics were presented to the members in attendance:

As of 30 July, 2003, The Association data base held 2,319 names of former crewmembers, of which we have located and verified the addresses and phone numbers of 921. These crewmembers are now on the mailing list for the Association Newsletter (Gunboat Riders).

The data file holds the names of 34 deceased crewmembers. (Included are those who died while attached to one of the ships.) Of the 34 deceased crewmembers, 5 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 29 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 2004 Reunion as well as Association Finances, Officers and the events we schedule at each reunion. Mr. McManuels reminded the membership of 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 2003 business meeting.

Shortly after the business meeting, we boarded the bus for the Longwood Gardens tour. Longwood Gardens is famous for being what is considered one of the best Botanical Gardens in the country. Starting with a relaxing lunch, our visit to Longwood Gardens provided a pleasant and enjoyable afternoon for all of us. By 4:00 we were back at the hotel and getting ready for the Banquet Dinner.

Saturday Banquet Dinner.....

After returning to the hotel, we had about an hour before the Banquet Dinner Program started. Refreshments were available at the cash bar starting at 6:00 PM and the Banquet Room opened at 7:00. Paul McGurgan (PG-88) presided over the Banquet Dinner and welcomed the members to the 2003 Patrol Gunboat Association Reunion Banquet. The U.S. Navy Color Guard Detail, from Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania paraded the Colors this year. Following the playing of the National Anthem, Paul led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. After the Color Guard retired the Colors, the Chaplain said the Benediction and Paul invited us all to join him for the 2003 Patrol Gunboat Association Banquet.

After dinner, Paul introduced the head table and our Guest Speaker for the evening, Commander Douglas B. "BUCK" Buchanan. CDR Buchanan earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Chemistry from the college of the Holy Cross in May, 1980. The ROTC unit's Battalion Commander, he was commissioned an Ensign in the United States Navy upon graduation.

Designated a Naval Flight Officer in 1981, he reported to VF-124 at NAS Miramar for advanced training as a Radar Intercept Officer in the F-14A Tomcat.

Commander Buchanan's career has included duty in several squadron including VF-2 "Bounty Hunters" where he made his first deployment in USS KITTY HAWK (CV-63). He was also attached to the "Screaming Eagles" of VF-51, making two WESTPAC deployments aboard USS CARL VINSON (CVN-70). While there, he completed his department head tour as Operations Officer.

In November, 1995 he reported aboard USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62), home ported in Yokosuka, Japan as Safety Officer. He reported to CINCUSNAVEUR, London, UK in September, 1997 as the Naval Component STO Chief and NAVEUR Special Access Programs Control Officer.

In September, 2000 CDR Buchanan transferred to Commander, Operational Test and Evaluation Force, Norfolk, Virginia as the Assistant Special Programs Officer. He is currently the Executive Officer of the Philadelphia NROTC Consortium.

CDR Buchanan has logged over 2400 flight hours and 477 carrier arrested landings in the F-14A. His personal awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Navy Meritorious Service Medals, Navy Commendation Medal and the Navy Achievement Medal.

Following dinner, we held the annual 50-50 drawing. We will have another 50-50 drawing at the 2004 Reunion. There are twelve 50-50 tickets included with this newsletter for the drawing that will be held following the Banquet Dinner in Concord. 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.**

Next came the raffle table drawing. We had many great prizes this year even though some of them disappeared from the hospitality room before they were given out. Another special treat this year was the pillows made by Jodi Bay, wife of Paul McGurgan (PG-88). Over the last few months she has been busy making a special pillow for each command, all the gunboats and the squadrons. Her donation of these pillows resulted in the Association making

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an additional \$500.00. Since I feel it would be inappropriate for me to purchase raffle table or 50-50 tickets, there was no chance for me to win the Canon Pillow. Bless her heart, Jodi made me one. She said that she must have made a mistake and that it was extra, but I know better.

After the raffle drawing, we were entertained with music and dancing from the Stafford Street String Band. This is a Contra Dance Band and I gotta tell you, they were great. The callers were Tori Barone and Nils Fredland. Not only do they perform exceptionally well, but they teach Contra Dance at the same time. I had a great time and I hope everyone else did too.

It was a great reunion as far as I am concerned, I do hope that everyone who attended enjoyed the reunion as much as I did.

Special thanks to my wife Nancy for all her help, Jodi Bay for the beautiful pillows, and to the members of the Patrol Gunboat Association, thanks for coming to Valley Forge, without you there would be no reunion. To Dave Donaldson, what a wonderful display, your hard work and dedication are appreciated by all. Lastly, to the members of the Association who came and made this reunion a success, thank you, I hope you enjoyed the reunion.

Sunday brought the hugs and handshakes, and the promises to meet again next year. 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.

SEE YOU IN CALIFORNIA NEXT YEAR!

CONCORD REUNION SURVEY

Each year we send out a Reunion Survey to try to gauge the number of members who will attend the next reunion. I would like to remind you why it is so important that you respond to this survey. First off, remember that it is just a survey, it is a tool that I use to assist me 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 my only way to estimate, 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 arrangements of virtually every event during the reunion.

I averaged the results of our six 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 2003 reunion and signed the contracts based on the results. The results of that survey, out of almost 800 Survey's mailed, I received a total of 110 responses. Of those, 78 indicated that they planned to attend the Valley Forge Reunion. There were 29 crewmembers who were 100% sure that they would attend, 22 who were 75% certain and 27 who were 50% certain that they would attend. I will use the data from this years survey to adjust the guarantees for the 2004 reunion. From our history it seems that of those who respond with a 100% certain, we should have 81.2% actually attend. Of the 75 percent certain, 59.8% should attend and of the 50% certain, 18.2% should show up in Concord. Simple to plan if that was all there was to it.

Of those attending the 2003 reunion in Valley Forge, 14 registered and attended without submitting a survey and 3 showed up without ever registering with me at all.

I must compute the required room block based on the results of the survey, taking into consideration that we will gain more members during the year as well as lose a few. The problem is that when the final prices and concessions are negotiated, they are based on the total room block that we guarantee. Add to that the fact that we can be penalized for failing to meet our room block, and the hotel can also refuse to honor the group rate on those rooms exceeding the guaranteed room block. There is some flexibility during the adjustment period, but the bottom line here is that the more accurate we are when we negotiate the final changes to the contract, the better the prices will be and the more concessions the hotel will be willing to make.

At Concord, we have blocked 210 paid nights during the week. I will be able to make some adjustments to that number about 5 months prior to the reunion, and these adjustments must be made based on the results of the 2004 Reunion Survey.

There are two areas where we need to do better. First would be for me

to have a better idea of the number of local members who show up unexpectedly and want to participate in the reunion without staying at the hotel. This is not usually a problem unless we get to the point where there is insufficient banquet space as was the case in San Diego. This was the primary reason for the Banquet Dinner count going so far above what I had figured on. The other area where we can easily improve is when we make our reservations at the hotel. There is simply no reason not to make advance reservations. We must release rooms from our block at the cut off or risk having the Association being required to pay for them. Every hotel that we work with has a very liberal cancellation policy. Plus, late reservations run the risk of not getting the Association room rate or even worse, not having a room available. The bottom line here is, make your reservations early.

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, 2003. This will make planning the 2004 Concord much easier and result in a better Reunion for everyone.

2004 DUES STATUS

Association dues for calendar year 2004 are due by December 31, 2003. We have had another great year for membership, excellent growth this year, our data base now holds the names of 2252 former crewmembers with names and addresses of 934 crewmembers from the Gunboats and associated staffs. We collected \$5560.00 in 2003 dues, and currently have \$1140.00 in dues for 2004. Calendar year 2003 saw the Association membership continue to grow. We continue to remain in the black, with sufficient funds in our account for us to avoid bank charges. Membership dues are \$20.00 per year. This money is used to cover the costs of producing and mailing the quarterly newsletters, maintenance of the Association's Internet Web Site and the printing and mailing of the Association Membership Directory. These funds are also used to pay for the mailing of over 700 newspaper and magazine press releases each year to announce the date and location of our next reunion. Press releases are produced and mailed between January and March of each year. Those members paying dues also receive a copy of the Association Membership Roster with addresses and phone numbers of other former crewmembers.

Your dues status is printed on the mailing label sent with this newsletter. This label shows your dues status for both the current year and calendar year 2004. To determine your dues status, check the label on the envelope that this newsletter came in.

If there is an "RP" on line 2 of the label next to "2003" then your dues are current for this year. If there is an "RP" next to the "2004" on the label then your dues are already paid for the 2004 calendar year. If there is a "RNP" or "RNP1" on the label, then your dues are not paid for the year indicated on the label.

The sample label indicates that the member is current for 2003 dues, but has not paid their 2004 dues.

If the label has (2003 H 2004 H), then the member is an Honorary Member and is exempt from Association Dues. This may sound

Your First and Last Name
Dues Status (2003 RP, 2004 RNP)
Your Street Address
City, State and Zip Code

complicated, but this is how I manage to filter the data base for labels and keep track of who should receive which newsletters and directories. If you have any questions, feel free to call me or send me an email message and ask for clarification.

Patrol Gunboat Association

Paul David McManuels Sr.
May 26, 1926 - September 19, 2003

The cat's in the cradle..... That is the title of a song by Harry Chapin. It's sort of a satire about a father who is always too busy with his professional goals to take time off to spend with his son. **"When are you coming home Dad? I don't know when, but we'll get together then son, ya know we'll have a good time then."**

Paul D. McManuels was always a perfectionist. So many times I heard the story of his first involvement in the Canberra reunions. At his very first reunion, he decided to leave very shortly after arriving, due primarily to the condition of the hotel. As he was heading to this car, he ran into an old shipmate named Art Richards. He and Art were best friends when they were on Canberra, and seeing him in the parking lot made him forget about the problems. The next morning he placed signs in the hotel lobby announcing the first Canberra Association Business Meeting. After the meeting, he took the helm and the New Canberra Association was formed. The USS Canberra Association became a passion for the rest of his life.

Like all children, I grew up, I started a life of my own. I enlisted in the Navy and moved on. I found a wonderful wife, we had children of our own. We had our own careers, goals, things we wanted to do. And, the tables had turned, **"When are you coming home son? I don't know when, but we'll get together then dad, you know we'll have a good time then"**.

In 1991 the relatively newly formed USS Canberra Association would hold their reunion in Virginia Beach at the Holiday Inn Executive Center. At the request of my father, I agreed to assist him by finding a Chaplain, a Guest Speaker and a Color Guard for the reunion. When the Chaplain had to cancel at the last minute, I agreed to handle the Invocation and Benediction at the Saturday Night Banquet Dinner. That night was the start of a long and wonderful relationship between Dad and Faye and Nancy and I, and the USS Canberra Association. It would also begin a tradition that would last for the next dozen years. For us, it was two reunions at the same time, the USS Canberra reunion as well as the McManuels family reunion.



Life moves on regardless of how much we try to make time stand still. Too much to do, too little time to do it in. Most of my Navy years were spent on sea duty. Fortunately I was able to attend the Canberra reunions most years, so my dad and I got to spend a week together each October, along with the members of the Canberra Association. When I retired from the Navy in 1996, I started on a new career. Taking time out to visit was not a priority then, it should have been. When Nancy's father died, she started to tell me that I should take an occasional weekend off and go visit with my dad and Faye; the writing was on the wall. I tried to visit more often, but now I realize that it was not often enough. When I began to organize my first reunion it was with his support and guidance. The Patrol Gunboat Association reunions meant another week together every year.

"When are you coming home son? I don't know when, but we'll get together then dad, you know we'll have a good time then".

On September 19, 2003 Paul D. McManuels transferred to the staff of the Supreme Commander. You will see him again someday, he will be waiting in the lobby. He will greet you with a hug and a smile and say, this must be your first reunion. I'm Paul McManuels and I am glad you made it. When my daughter in law gets here, she will get you checked in and give you your free coffee mug, just for coming to the reunion. And, she will gladly sell you some raffle tickets, and if you buy twenty dollars worth, she will give you a free ballcap. If you have any problems or questions, see me or my son, he isn't here yet either, but I count on him to keep me out of trouble. Oh yes, when the Historian gets here, be sure to see his display, it gets better every year. In the meantime, grab a beer or soft drink, a handful of chips, find a chair and relax and enjoy yourself. Welcome aboard shipmate.

The following is from the Banquet Dinner Invocation at the USS Canberra 1991 Virginia Beach reunion:

"FINALLY, LORD, WE ASK THAT YOU HELP US TO LEARN AND GROW. HELP US TO REMEMBER THESE TIMES WE HAVE SHARED. HELP US TO TAKE WITH US, WHEN WE LEAVE, OUR SENSE OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS, OUR MEMORIES AND OUR PRIDE. LET US BE CONTINUALLY BLESSED IN THAT WE ALL ARE SHIPMATES AND WILL ALWAYS BE. AND PLEASE LORD, WATCH BETWEEN US AS WE ARE ABSENT ONE FROM ANOTHER."



"I miss you Dad, you were my shipmate and my best friend."

Patrol Gunboat Association

A Beautiful Final Call, the History of Taps

By Rev Henry Eisenhart
Department Chaplain - The American Legion



One of the best known and most loved of all bugle calls is Taps. It is also one of the most often heard calls. On many occasions Taps is sounded -- over the tomb of the unknown at Arlington, over the battleship "Arizona" at Pearl Harbor, at every one of our national cemeteries, at memorial services for veterans, and at events of many veterans' organizations.

Like many bugle calls, Taps is more than a hundred years old. The man who composed it was not a musician, although he had a keen ear for music. Rather, he was a successful lawyer from New York. He commanded the 12th New York Volunteer Infantry at the start of the Civil War. His name was Danie Butterfield and he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and later promoted to Major General for actions at the Battle of Gaines Mill.

One sultry night in July of 1852, after a long, hard, march, General Butterfield was standing with some companions when the final call was sounded. At this time, it was a tune inherited from the British, entitled "Extinguish Lights." Turning to a fellow officer, General Butterfield said, "I have never liked that call. It's not the way to end a day."

The next morning the General wrote some musical notes on a piece of paper and asked the brigade bugler, Private Oliver Norton of the 83rd Pennsylvania Infantry, to sound the call. After some minor corrections, both were pleased with what they had produced. Then General Butterfield ordered that this new call be the last call of the day for the brigade.

At that moment, Taps was born. Never in the history of unrecorded music, has an unpublished piece of music spread with such rapidity, lasted so long, or been so loved. Within days other units of the Union Army adopted it. As the notes drifted over the picket lines, the Confederate Army too began ending the day with this call. By the end of the Civil War, Taps was well known and used in both armies.

Twenty five years after the Battle of Gettysburg, a reunion was held on that battle ground in the hope that, at long last, the survivors of that conflict might become friends. But, as the veterans walked across that wheat field where so many of their friends had died, and down by Devil's Glen where they had fought with such intense ferocity, the old bitterness welled up in their hearts again. It seemed as if a reconciliation was a lost cause.

Then on the second day, a man whose name has been lost, went to Little Round Top, and in a spontaneous moment of inspiration, put a bugle to his lips and sounded Taps. As the notes, clear and bright as a star

on a winters night, drifted across the battlefield, the men stopped and listened. It is said that they rose to attention and held a salute until the last echo faded away. That single spontaneous moment proved to be an important factor in helping old soldiers on both sides realize that they were men who fought with and against one another in that terrible place in July, when the fate of the United States of America hung in balance. When the battle was over, they had settled that we really were one nation, indivisible. That realization moved them to understand that they no longer had to be Blue or Gray, but could meet together as old Comrades.

When soldiers have grown to love the call that ends their day, it is inevitable that this call will become the final call when they are laid to rest. That is what Taps is today. It is not a sad call or a funeral dirge, for it is no more a sad time then when twilight is the sad part of the day. More than anything else, Taps is a prayer. The words which have come to be associated with this call are as beautiful as the music -- simple and direct, as one might associate with a comrade in arms:

Day is done, gone the sun
From the field, from the hill, from the sky
All is well, safely rest. God is nigh.

Thanks and praise for our days
'neath the sun, 'neath the stars 'neath the sky.
As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

This is one of several explanations on the origin of Taps. It seems fitting that I include this version in this newsletter. The services for my father included a joint ceremonial unit from the local VFW and American Legion who performed honors at the cemetery. Like my father, they were just old shipmates, men who were called to duty and who gladly answered that call. There was a job to be done, and as always, they did the job well.

I just wanted to say a special thanks to those of you who send cards and called to let us all know that you cared. I really didn't intend to notify the Association of my fathers death, but it was necessary to let the members know why I was taking so long to follow-up on the Valley Forge reunion. I appreciate your understanding.