

The 820 Newsletter

World Wide Web Edition



Volume 2, Number 4

November 1995

SHIP'S OFFICE

HOLIDAY GREETINGS On wishing you all the best for the upcoming holidays. Your editor remembers his first Christmas on the RICH in the NNSY, Portsmouth, VA because I had the duty!.. Nonetheless we had a decorated tree of sorts in the torn-up wardroom and an occasionally passable TV signal on our old set. The crew was living off the ship but the officers were aboard amongst all the chaos, cold water, and yard birds eating their lunches in our rooms...builds character! Anyhow have a great holiday.

REUNION PLANNING Joe Saunders, who heads up the reunion effort continues to work out the details and arrangements for the event to be held in the Holiday Inn, Hagerstown, MD beginning Thursday, April 25th and running through Sunday the 28th. He is finalizing the itinerary but it looks like the overall schedule will be:
Thursday, April 25: Arrival, Registration, Bus Tour of the Gettysburg Battlefield, bus departs mid-A.M.
Association meeting in the evening to discuss and finalize Constitution & By-Laws. Election of Officers.
Friday, April 26th: Annapolis Bus Tour depart A.M. Ladies Tour of the Outlets. Hospitality Room open evening.
Saturday, April 27: Bus Tour of Antietam Battlefield and Harpers Ferry, bus departs A.M. Happy Hour prior to the Banquet begins at 1900 with dinner at 2000.
Sunday, April 28: Breakfast/Brunch and Farewells till Reunion 1997.
In the next newsletter, FEB'96, we will be including the registration materials for the 1996 reunion.

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS PROCESS OF ADOPTION A draft copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the USS RICH DD/DDE-820 Association was circulated as an enclosure to Vol. 2, No. 3 of the 820 Newsletter. Thanks are extended to shipmates, Arey, Barnard, Hogg, Hughes, Owen and Weber who responded to our call for comments and suggestions. The draft, as modified by their suggestions, will be available at the reunion for examination prior to the ship's association meeting on April 25. The document should be discussed, changed and put into its final draft form at that meeting. At that point we should have a final version for adoption by all our shipmates perhaps best done through a mailed ballot. Including another draft version as an enclosure to this current newsletter would double the cost of the mailing, a cost we are trying hard to hold down. [Top](#)

SHIP'S LOG

The official history of the RICH continues. (Reference: Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. 1976. Vol. 6, Naval History Division, Department of the Navy)

"Rotated regularly to duty with the 6th Fleet, RICH operated during the 1950's and 1960's principally off the east coasts of the United and Canada; in the Caribbean; and the Mediterranean. In addition to participation in fleet and NATO exercises she steamed with the 6th Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean during the Suez Crisis of 1956. Two years later she supported the Marine landings in Lebanon."

The above information is quoted directly from the "official" Navy records. Accounts in the "Dictionary of Naval Fighting Ships" are clearly meant only to sketch out, in brief, the ship's history. The editor cannot vouch for the veracity of this official accounts but only provides them for your information.. Elaboration on them by shipmates is always welcome and encouraged. Moreover your comments provide other sources of interesting information that can expand our knowledge of the periods covered in these all-to-brief accounts. The information below was contained in a letter from Bob Irving (LCDR USN Ret.) who was in the engineering department of the ship during 1948-50. He offers another perspective on a part of the ship's official history previously published in the 820 Newsletter.

"The source you (editor of the Newsletter) quoted for 1948-1949 of the Rich's history was partly in error and woefully inadequate to cover what the ship did during that period. The error was "based at Key West, Fla." The ship was based at Norfolk, VA during that period. During the period when nay Navy ships were almost laid up due to personnel and fuel shortages, DesRon EIGHT on the USS NEW, the RICH and three other DDE were at sea on a continuing basis verifying the antisubmarine search patterns developed by the operations research geniuses. The ones that worked went into the NATO & US ASW manuals."

"Not only did the ship visit Cherbourg for ten days in August with the other four ship of DesRon EIGHT, the USS MISSOURI, and a group of destroyer minelayers, carrying half of the Naval Academy Midshipmen, but also Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and then back to Annapolis. The preceding month the same ships has visited Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in England and Guantanamo with the other half of the midshipmen."

"In Portsmouth, our nest of three destroyers was "adopted" by HMS DOLPHIN, the Royal Submarine Base. (It is British naval tradition to name shore stations, bases and training facilities with the names of historical ships, personages, mythical figures or animals proceeded by "MHS."-the editor) The night they hosted all of our

officers to a bash, I was the Nest Duty Officer. The rest of our braid wearers were "poured" back on board in the see sma' hours, and there was little work done that day. This was during the period the British called "austerity", when small children and pregnant women were rationed a pint of milk and one egg a day. We returned the hospitality on HMS DOLPHIN by having a feast in each of three wardrooms. The table was loaded with roast of beef, a large ham, and a roast turkey, with all the "fixings." The first visitor to the RICH was RN LCDR's wife who probably tried for years to loose her Cockney accent; she went wide-eyed and said, "AM,I'ven't seen "am in eight years!"

"Crossing the Atlantic to Cherbourg, the shipfitters approached me at quarters and said, "Mr. Irving, the starboard screw sounds like it's trying to chew its way up into our compartment." They slept right over the screw. I promised to have a look when we got to Cherbourg. They put us in back channel which didn't appear to have been flushed out since the time of Napoleon and was so murkey one couldn't see a thing, so I put it off to Guantanamo. When I dove using a hoseline mask in the clear waters there, I found the starboard dunce cap (cone abaft the hub) was gone completely. It appeared that the last yard had failed to safety-wire the studs tightening the nuts. Of the forty or so nuts, more than half had vibrated loose, and the remaining studs had sheared off. We got a new dunce cap in floating dry-dock at "Gitmo", and the odd sounds ceased."

"Shortly after I left the ship in early 1950, she was sent north for operations off Newfoundland, making a stop at Quebec. Some time on that trip, a huge sea boarded the RICH, caught the splinter shield on the 01 deck aft protecting the Secondary Conn, and unrolled the overhead in aft Officer's Country like opening a sardine can. The Operations Officer later told me he came out of the aft shower room to see a waterfall pouring out from the louvers in his cabin door." Thanks Bob for the recollections. The RICH seemed to be prone to storm damage as the account later in the newsletter points out.

Ulysses Best's (now BTC USN Retired) 1946 log of his time on RICH continues:

October	November
7-9 @Charleston NSY	2 Arrived Gibraltar
8 Went into dry dock	9 Underway @0800 for Naples
19 Underway @ 1000 from Charleston to NORVA	12 Arrived Naples
20 Arrived NORVA	18 Underway from Naples
	23 Arrived Alexandria, Egypt @1000
	Underway for Naples Top
	29

WINTER GALE & STORM OF 1958-59

The winter of 1958-59 was a particularly damaging one for the RICH and she entered the shipyard ("NNSY" Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, VA) or went along side a tender three time that winter to repair storm damage. The worst damage occurred during as ASW-Task Group Alpha exercise that began for us on Monday, December 29, 1958 and ended with out return somewhat beat up to NNSY on Friday, January 9, 1959. The material damage the ship sustained was significant with many forecstale stanchions bent or carried away, the face shield of Mount 51 dished in so that the guns could not be elevated, many inflatable life rafts missing, several fender and stores lockers that jutted out from the midships deck house stove in, with cracked expansion joints and spring hull plates in the engineering spaces rounding out the significant damage. The most serious injury was to a shipmate- a steward if my memory serves me right - who happened to be passing through the internal passageway port and aft of the midships passage when a boarding sea caved in one of several lockers located along the side of the deckhouse. Because of the tremendous force of the sea hitting the side of the deck house the internal hatch opening into the passageway to that locker failed when the locker was crushed and smashed into him with considerable force injuring his back. Also heavily damaged during the storm was the VALLEY FOIRGE (CVS-45) who lost a strip some 70 feet along her port bow and forward edge of the flight deck. She subsequently entered the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the damaged section was replaced by a bow removed from the FRANKLIN (CVS-13). Two low pressure systems combined to produce a real "nor'easter" that caught our task group (CarDiv 16 RADM John S. Thach commanding) with the VALLEY FORGE and her accompanying destroyers of DesRon 36 at sea roughly north-northwest of Bermuda. Monday, the day of sortie, was a relatively clear day and for the RICH the storm began to be felt late Monday and early Tuesday with increasing winds and steepening seas. On the VALLEY FORGE, "Late that night (Tuesday) visibility diminished, and the wind, which had sent the temperature below freezing had backed (that is, it changed in a counter clockwise direction) to 270 degrees and piped 30,40, and 50 knots." By early Wednesday morning the seas had built to 20-25 feet and the formation course was changed to 125 degrees to the ease individual ships; motion and progress through the heightening seas. By this time green water was coming over the bows and the helmsmen had great difficulty in steering because of the steep, breaking following seas. The ship was actually "surfing" down the fronts of these breakers. On the Beaufort Scale a storm readily qualifies as a ""Gale""when the winds reach 34-40 knots, the wave heights are 13-20 feet with moderately high waves of some length whose edges or crests begin breaking into spindrift and are well marked with flowing foam and down wind streaks. "During the next 12 hours the storm would build through a "Strong Gale" becoming a full blown "Storm" with winds of 48-55 knots and wave heights off 20-30 feet. The worst damage to the RICH occurred during the early morning hours of Thursday when the bow plunged down into a steep wave. On the VALLEY FORGE Wednesday evening"....by movie time the barometer reached 29.6 inches...the wind had hit 72 knots...and the seas ranged from 50 to 60 feet..." with the carrier pitching"...more than 85 feet." What do you think the RICH's 390'6" was doing at this time?

The screening destroyers had been directed to maneuver on their own earlier in the afternoon and repeated

attempts by CAPT Cecil Clark to turn the RICH back to head north and into the seas rather than running before them were unsuccessful. If we had not been able to change course, in time we would have eventually approached the shoal waters north and west of Bermuda. With the rudder hard over and the port and starboard screws opposing each other, full ahead or back to twist the ship, the RICH would swing around until the seas and wind were abeam. She would then shudder, roll through great arches in the wave troughs, hand up and refuse to turn further. There was nothing to do but fall off and resume our previous course. By late Thursday the wind had eventually dropped to 35 knots and we were able to come to a more comfortable northerly course with the ship quartering the wind and seas. Because we were in the Gulf Stream with a colder wind blowing over warmer waters the sea was blanketed with "sea smoke" or "frost smoke." This weather phenomenon produces a surface fog or mist ("smoke") sometimes to a considerable height. In this instance the fog spread out in a shallow layer near the surface of the seas so that the topmost parts of the masts on the DDs and the island and flight deck of the carrier could be seen riding above the surface of the sea that was obscured. As the seas would roll past and the ships were on the crests or troughs of the waves the ships would appear or disappear as if riding in the clouds...an unusual sight.

On January 9 the RICH returned to the NNSY for badly needed repairs and by February 25 we had completed our stay and were on our way to another Task Group Alpha ASW exercise. (References: "Stormy Weather, Down in the Valley" All Hands, Number 511, August 1959, pp.2-5 Log kept by LTJG R.A. Marquis, RICH's OPS Officer. Recollections of the editor 36 years later!) [Top](#)

FROM THE ENGINEERING OFFICE

In Vol. 2 No. 3 of the newsletter we asked the question: "Can diesel oil be used in the boilers? The answer is Yes but... Dick Arey (CO of RICH 1954-56) provided the following comment: Based on my experience as Chief Engineer of MANCHESTER (CL-83) I would say this should only be an emergency procedure. Better save the diesel fuel for the emergency generators if the engineering plant is damaged or the ship is dangerously low on fuel oil. The only way to "get it there" would be to use diesel to dilute fuel oil before burning in the boiler furnace. To pump diesel directly into the burners would invite a "flashback" and serious fire in the fireroom."

Next questions supplied by Chief Best:

What is the maximum speed on 1,2,3,4 boilers?

18,27,30,34.5 kts

What is the total shaft horse power?

60,000 SHP. VALLEY FORGE, for example had 150,000 SHP available.

What type of main propulsion engines were installed?

Turbines. Does anyone remember which: Westinghouse, General Electric or Alice Chalmers?

LARGE SCALE MODEL OF A GEARING CLASS DESTROYER

For those of you who will be near Newport, RI you can view a very large scale model of a Gearing (DD-710) Class destroyer on the Navy Base. The model is about 7-8 feet long and can be found in a glass, waist-high case in the Officers Club on the Naval Base. Anyone is welcome to view the model. The finely detailed model was built by the firm of Gibbs & Cox, Inc. who were the design agents for the Sumner and Gearing Class destroyers for the Navy Department. Builders models were produced for the Navy each time a new design came on line. If you want to see a great replica of a Gearing like the RICH as she would have appeared when delivered during WWII, Newport, RI is the place to visit. Also don't miss the Naval Ware College Museum just up the hill from the Officers Club.

TAPS

We regret to inform our shipmates that Donald F. Oberdoester "OBE" passed away this summer. He served in the RICH from 1949-1953. As many of you know "OBE" was instrumental in getting this USS RICH organization underway. He put together the first ship's reunion in Norfolk, VA in April of 1993. His enthusiasm was infectious as all who had the fine privilege of meeting him know. We owe the existence of this organization to OBE's affection for his shipmates, the RICH and the Navy. We will miss him. Ed Coale, who informed the editor of OBE's death offers the following memorial: "O God, Father of us all we here extend these final earthly tributes to our beloved comrade. Accept our prayers in behalf of the servant departed. Welcome him to Thy house to rest in peace. Look with mercy on the loved ones bereaved by his passing. Comfort and console them through Thine own tenderness. These things we ask in Thy name. Amen." [Top](#)

PLANK OWNERS

We continue the list of RICH Plank Owners provided by shipmate Russ Norton (MM1 1946-47) in the original Commissioning booklet for the ship dated July 3, 1946 in Orange, Texas:

F.R. Ludwin, S2c
N. Lundeberg, S2c
D.V. Lundquist, RM2c
D.B. Lyman, F1c
R.M. Lyons, S2c
B.A. Macewin, S2c
S.P.J. Maciariello, S2c
R.A. Mackey, S2c
H.M. Maddock, S2c
R.E. Mader, S2c

J. Marshello, S2c
F.B. Martin, S2c
D.E. Mas, S2c
A.S. Mawyer, MoMM3c
J.R. McPhearson, S2c
J.R. Molloy, EM3c
C.R. Moore, Jr. S2c
B.O. Moore, SoM1c
J.J. Moore, SC3c
P.L. Mudge, BM1c

G. Reid, S2c
P.H. Reid, S2c
B.A. Reilly, S2c
A.A. Reininger, S2c
E.L. Richardson, F2c
E.F. Rickerd, S2c
I. Rines, S2c
J.M. Rivette, F2c
D.L. Robbins, S2c
J.J. Rocco, S2c

O.C. Mahlow, S2c
J.M.H. Mahoney, S2c
C.C. Maletic, S2c
R.A. Marcello, S2c
E.L. Marchione, S2c
I. Margolies, S2
S. Margolis, S2c
S. Markowitz, S2c
W. J. Marks, S2c
C. R. Marshall, GM3c
F. Marshall, StM2c

O.B. New, MM1c
W.D. Nicholson, Y2c
R.E. Norton, MM1c
D.A. Oberlander, S1c
E.F. O'Brien, 3rd, SM1c
M.F. Otradovec, S2c
T.A. Penny, F2c
E.H. Petra, SM1c
J.J. Pilch, WT3c
L.R. Previto, RM1c
C. Reid, S2c

F.D. Rockwell, Jr., S2c
E.C. Roesel, S2c
L.A. Rogers, F2c
E.O. Roggenbuck, S2c
E.L. Roof, S2c
L.V. Roop, S2c
W.C. Rosell, S2c
R. Rosenblatt, S2c
J. Rosner, S2c
J. Rossey, S2c
J. Roth, S2c

SHIP'S FUNDS

Have you thought about making your donation to the Ship's Fund? Each issue of the 820 Newsletter costs about \$140-150 to produce. This includes the cost of postage, envelopes, and duplication. It would be appreciated if you could make out a \$10 check to "USS RICH Reunion/820 Newsletter" and put it in the mail to George Kilmer, Evans Run Drive, Martinsburg, WV 25401.

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Transcription courtesy of Pamela Compher
