

The 820 Newsletter

World Wide Web Edition



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SHIP'S OFFICE

Plan Ahead! The 1998 RICH Reunion will be held in Monck's Corner, SC April 22nd through the 25th. Full information will be found in the February "820 Newsletter."

BUILDING THE RICH

As you know our ship was built at "Consolidated Steel" in Orange, Texas and was commissioned on July 3, 1945. Where is Orange, Texas and what was "Consolidated Steel" company? You plank owners well remember, no doubt, the place and circumstance, but for those of us who were not there, Orange is on the Sabine River up-river from Port Arthur near the town of Beaumont. Louisiana lies just across the river where the ship was built a short trip down-river to the Gulf of Mexico.

The Consolidated Shipbuilding Division was a part of Consolidated Western Steel Corporation formed from an amalgamation of several other companies in the Orange area, an area that had long built ships beginning with wooden hulled vessels and steel ships during World War I. During the period 1942-46 the yard built 39 destroyers, 92 destroyer escorts, 106 LCIs (Landing Craft Infantry) and nine APDs (Amphibious Personnel Deployer). Destroyers built were numbered: DD-569 to 580, DD-817-825 and DD-875-890. Long standing members of DesRon Thirty-Six, the RICH, NEW (DD-818), HOLDER (DD-819) and BASILONE (DD-824) were all built in Orange. At the peak of the shipbuilding period the yard employed some 27,000 people. Building all these ships was an exceptional undertaking since before the war the yard had a much smaller work force and had no experience in building complicated warships. In 1948 Consolidated was bought by U.S. Steel (which as you know no longer exists as such) and the yard became known as United States Steel Company, Fabrication Division. They built: "...lock gates, highway bridges, land-based drill rigs, and miles of rolled and welded tubular goods for pipe lines." but no more naval vessels. (Source: Williams, H. 1986. "Gateway to Texas: The History of Orange and Orange County.") [Top](#)

TRADITIONS OF THE NAVY

What is the meaning of the work "knot?" To ascertain the speed of a vessel, mariners had knots tied at regular intervals in a coil of rope. The rope was bent to a "log" and the log hove overboard. With an hour-glass each knot, as it disappeared over the taffrail, was timed thus originating the custom of telling off a ship's speed in knots instead of miles. [Top](#)

BOOT CAMP

There is still a Boot Camp but what goes on there doesn't sound like the old Navy's means of shipping a bunch of civilians into novice sailors. Today the Navy's sole boot camp is located at the Great Lakes Recruit Training Command just north of Chicago. The training lasts nine weeks. Recruits are met in Chicago by a bus on which they see a video, accompanied by rock music, on what boot camp will be like. They are told in the video "...anybody can get through boot camp" and it's "O.K. to cry." They are not told that it is O.K. to eat quiche, however. Each prospective sailor get a "Blue Card" that is supposed to help each deal with stress. You can hand the card over to a "Navy Trainer" if you (he or she) feels blue. When you worked your week on mess cooking in the "old Navy" were you undergoing any stress? Your editor was stressed, really stressed, at Bainbridge when he accidentally dumped over a 10-gallon GI garbage can filled with the dregs of breakfast; cereal, fruit, syrup, and

sticky, sugary milk that ran under the chill locker. I'm sure the Chief Stewburner would have been pleasantly surprised if I had handed him a Blue Card. Needless to say I never dropped a speck of anything more on that Chief's deck. But to go on: The Navy has dropped many of the older practices that the "...old timers say fostered cohesion and discipline." No more drilling with rifles on the grinder since the Navy now reasons few will ever use firearms. Excuse me: quarterdeck watches, pier sentries, landing parties, etc.? Didn't lugging that old 9-pound '03 Springfield around foster cohesion and discipline - especially if you were unlucky enough to drop it during a drill? The new approach, the Navy says, "...gets results with young recruits who crave strict standards they may not be finding at home or in school." Maybe...but some outside of boot camp don't think so. "When these kids get to the fleet, one commander says privately, you can see it isn't working." Who does it the old way that works? You guessed it - The Marine Corps! If it ain't broke, don't fix it. (Source: "Boot Camp Goes Soft: Empathetic drill sergeants make basic training easier, but the recruits may not be ready for war. TIME magazine, August 4, 1977). Do you remember what you earned when you got out of boot camp? In 1950, as an SN assuming you were single, you would have received \$95.55 base pay with \$31.50 Subsistence and a \$45.00 Quarters Allowance. Your CPO, if he had 10 years of service, had a base pay of \$227.85 while First Class Petty Officers were earning \$198.45. [Top](#)

FROM THE GALLEY

From an old sailor's ditty:

"And now we're out to sea, my boys, the winds come on to blow;
One half the watch is sick on deck,
the other half below. But as for the provisions, we don't get half enough;
A little piece of stinking beef
and a blamed small bag of duff. Singing blow ye winds of the morning,
Blow ye winds heigh ho,
Heave the galley Overboard and chase the cook below."

While that song reflects the situation in the 19th century much has changed in the ensuing 100 or so years. For all you "java" "joe" "mud" and coffee lovers: "On a typical aircraft carrier (today) soda, milk and water are consumed at a higher rate per day than coffee. Over a typical 24-hour period for a carrier with a crew of 5,200 the consumption of beverages is:

- Milk (1%) 10,000 10 ounce glasses
- Juices 3,000 6- ounce glasses
- Soda 9,000 12-ounce cans
- Coffee 6,000 10-ounce cups
- "Bug Juice" 2,500 to 3,000 6-ounce glasses

Coffee facts: Consumption among coffee drinkers is declining. In 1995 the average coffee drinker consumed 3.5 cups per day, down from 3.6 cups per day in 1993; 38% of coffee drinkers drink their coffee black; 62% add a sweetener and/or a creaming agent: 11% of the U.S. population drinks decaffeinated coffee with an average of 2.2 cups per drinker per day and finally, 2.2% of the population consumes specialty coffees like cappuccino and espresso. (Source: Navy Times) [Top](#)

DESRON THIRTY-SIX AND THE RICH (continued)

We continue the history of DesRon 36. " In September 1957 the Squadron entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a regular overhaul. In January 1958 the Squadron sailed for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for Refresher Training until February. The Squadron then deployed to the Sixth Fleet in March 1958. The Squadron returned to Norfolk in September 1958 and was assigned to Task Group ALFA from October through December 1958 when the ships received extensive training in ASW Operations and evaluated new techniques. During the first quarter of 1959 DESRON 36, less MULLINIX, operated as a unit of Task Group ALFA (TG 81.8). On 1 April 1959, MULLINIX and H.J. Ellison left DESRON 36. R.A. OWNS (DDE-827) joined DESRON 36 and replaced NEW as flagship. On 4 May 1959 DESRON 36 was relieved from duty with TG 81.8 and immediately became part of TG 83.3, another ASW group with which the Squadron operated until 17 August 1959 conducting ASW exercises. The squadron participated in a six-week indoctrination cruise for Midshipmen in June and July." (Source: From a Med. Cruise Book. (To be concluded in the next Newsletter) [Top](#)

SHIP'S LOG

One of our shipmates Thomas R. Hegele (then ENS. Hegele) kept an extensive Junior Officer Journal on the ship beginning in January 1964. The journal is quite detailed and we will be running parts of it as we did with Chief Best's and others.

"Reported to USS RICH (DD-820) at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in early January 1964. First few weeks were spent going in and out daily for refresher training. Spent one weekend in Kingston, Jamaica.

Monday, 27 January 1964. Underway from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (GITMO). Conducted damage control drills with DC Central and Repair Party 5.

Tuesday, 28 January 1964. Underway from GITMO. Conducted damage control drills in the morning and plane guarded for FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (CVA-42) in the afternoon. Stood the Junior Officer of the Deck (JOOD) watch from 1800 to 2000 (Second Dog Watch). Spent some time in the gun director learning how it works.

Wednesday, 29 January 1964. Repair of #1 SSG delayed getting underway from GITMO until 1115. Had Starboard antisubmarine warfare (ASW) watch in afternoon. Stood 2000-2400 (Evening) watch JOOD while plane guarding for FDR (DVA-42).

Thursday, 30, January 1964. Underway from GITMO. Ran damage control drills in the morning and antisubmarine rocket (ASROC) drills in the afternoon. Stood 1200-1600 (Afternoon) watch as JOOD having the conn part of the time.

Friday, 31 January, 1964. Underway from GITMO. Ran ASW exercises in the morning. In the afternoon we towed and were towed by the R.L. WILSON (DD-847). This was a first for most of us. Other than battle, flight operations and towing are probably the most dangerous evolutions engaged in by sailors. To prevent injuries, each move must be thorough and deliberate. Since things can happen quickly it is important that standard operating procedures (SOPs) be established and each person be thoroughly familiar with his job and that of his neighbors.

Saturday, 1 February 1964. In port GITMO. Had lecture in the morning.

Sunday, 2 February 1964. In port GITMO. Had the 0800-1200 (Morning) watch and Engineering duty. Boilerman school would have been more useful if we'd had more "hands on" experience.

Monday, 3 February 1964. Underway from GITMO. Damage control and engineering drills in the morning. Had a Z-6-G and a Z-17-G (gunnery drills in the afternoon) Learned that I am being sent to Drone Antisubmarine Helicopter (DASH) controller school at Dam Neck, VA." (To be continued) [Top](#)

GUNNERY SCHOOL

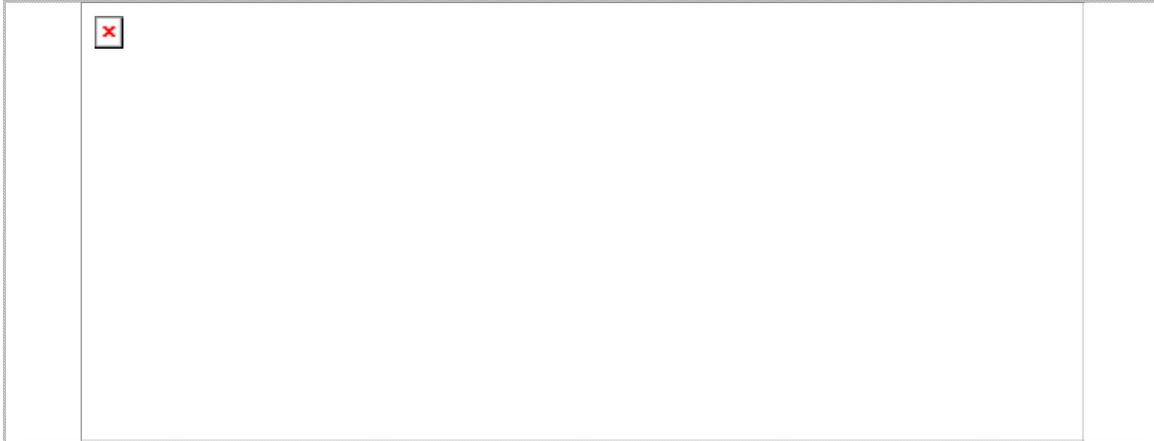
How much of your gunnery training can all you ex-gunnery types remember? Here are two quiz questions you should be able to answer with ease. Circle the correct answer or answers.

1. The CO orders the gunners to split the main battery to fire at two enemy battleships - one dead-ahead, the other directly astern. You as a knowledgeable gunnery petty officer should:
 - a. refuse the order since you have no MK 3 Mod 4 welding equipment on board to repair the split.
 - b. advise the CO that the recoil of the guns in such a firing will cause the ship to buckle amidships.
 - c. reprimand the CO for maneuvering his ship into such a position.
 - d. Give the command "Silence," put on your life jacket, and send for the chaplain.
2. The pointer in the MK 37 director can not locate the target in his sight. As control petty officer you

should:

- a. "slew" him on to the sight.
- b. shift to automatic until the pointer goes below to get his glasses.
- c. Assume that he was boresighted incorrectly during your last yard availability
And have the corpsman examine him for a new parallax corrector.
- d. find a larger target that can be seen more easily.

And speaking of guns: The standard MK12, 5-in./38-cal. Dual purpose gun the RICH carried during her lifetime fired 54 to 55-lb projectiles. The surface range of those projectiles was about 18,200 yds. at a 45-degree elevation. Today, a "proof-of-concept" firing assembly for the new MK-45, Mod 4 gun has been delivered to the Navy. This gun is a 5-in./62-cal. weapon. The phenomenal range capability of this new concept gun using the Extended Range Guided Munitions (ERGM) will be up to 63 nautical miles. The current MK 45s have an extended range of 13 nautical miles. [Top](#)



The radioman drawing is by LCDR Fred Freeman, USNR and is taken from "United States Destroyer Operations in World War II, by Theodore Roscoe. 1953. Publ. By U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, MD [Top](#)

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Transcription courtesy of Pamela Compher