

The 820 Newsletter

World Wide Web Edition



Volume 7, Number 2

May, 2000

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Reunion 2000 Success!

Termed "Best so far this century"

Sarasota, Florida, May 3, 2000. A gathering of 47 shipmates plus their wives, pals and significant others made up the attendance of the annual USS RICH Reunion. We fed 97 people at Saturday's Grand Banquet.

The scene was the Ramada/South Sarasota located in central Sarasota County which provided excellent facilities, excellent food and an excellent staff who saw to our every need in making everyone's stay a pleasantly memorable one.

A lineup of available activities including swimming, golfing, deep sea fishing, beach walking and barbequing and, or course, ample time to visit with one another. Time to just sit, sip and visit with old shipmates, renew old acquaintances and forge new relationships. There was also time for shipmates to take independent excursions to any of the many, many Sarasota area attractions. Being a tourist mecca, there was no limit to what visitors could find.

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Day By Day: Thursday, May 4th



Thursday morning found a group of shipmates and wives touring a local plant nursery, Tropiflora, where at any given time you could expect to wander through 2500 varieties of Bromeliads, Tillandsias, Orchids and other succulents totaling over one and a half *million* plants on the 20-acre site.

Thursday afternoon we gathered at Turtle Beach Pavilion, a county-operated beach facility where we feasted on pizza fully catered by Domino's. All the pizza, salad and soft drinks you wanted for a very reasonable price. (We brought the beer.)



Following a sensational sunset, it was back to the Ramada and the Rich Hospitality Suite.

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[Reunion 2000: Day By Day: Friday, May 5th](#)

Friday brought another gorgeous day with shipmates spending leisure time shopping, deep sea fishing and golfing throughout the morning and early afternoon.

Late afternoon found us back at the Ramada for a poolside barbeque. Anyone who hosts an outside event holds their breath and prays continually to Mother Nature for cooperation. And cooperate she did! Once the Florida sunshine fell behind the western building, the temperature dropped into the mid-70's and nary a bug was to be found. Result: Everyone stayed put and enjoyed the time to visit well into the evening



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Reunion 2000: Day By Day: Saturday, May 6th

Traditionally, Saturday morning is reserved to conduct the Association's business (while the wives go shopping) and this year was no exception.



Minutes of the meeting are available to members upon request. The highlights of the meeting were elections and appointments. Chuck Weber was re-elected as Vice President and Larry Dixon was elected as Secretary. President Johnny Skillen appointed Don Hogg and Jerry Dunnigan as Master-At-Arms and William "Bill" Billings as Parliamentarian. E.R. "Hoot"

Gibson continues his appointment as Chaplin. Marshall DuBois agreed to continue as Editor of the 820 Newsletter.

In absence of the appropriate Association, it was approved to begin terms of office for the Board of Directors effective with this year. Elections will be held heretofore in accordance with the Association's Bylaws. The Board of Directors listing appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

Discussion was held with regard to the planned USS RICH memorial aboard the USS Laffey at Patriot's Point (Charleston) SC. This plan was disapproved by the people in charge of the Laffey. Chuck Weber will be investigating possibilities aboard the USS JP Kennedy in Fall River, MA and Johnny Skillen will investigate the USS Kidd in Baton Rouge, LA as possible sites for a perpetual memorial to the USS RICH.

Marshall DuBois reported to the membership that the USS Rich website was still being operated at no expense to the Association. By motion, it was approved that the money earmarked for website expense continue to hold that earmark until needed.

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Reunion 2000: Day By Day: Saturday, May 6th

Then it's Saturday evening and time for the Grand Banquet! Everyone is dressed to the nines. Of course no one fits in their Dress Blues, but nonetheless everyone is gorgeous. The red, white and blue color scheme of the dining room together with the miniature American flags set the stage for a patriotic theme.

Following cocktails, the program began with the posting of the colors, Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation by Chaplin Hoot Gibson. Then... a sumptuous buffet fit for a... well, a U.S. Navy destroyerman.

It was then our honor and privilege to have former RICH Commanding Officer, Captain Edward C. Whelan provide and speak to the accomplishments of RICH and her many crewmen while serving the nation during a period he so aptly referred to as "World War III". His remarks gave each of us a new sense of contribution to ourselves, our ship and our country.



It was a wonderful time to hear "This is the Captain speaking..." Bravo Zulu to you Captain, from a grateful crew.

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For Our Deceased Shipmates



One of the more serious aspects of RICH reunions is the recognition and honoring those shipmates who have passed away. The tradition provides a single place setting on an individual table.

The ceremony begins with the reading of "In Memoriam" which explains each part of the table. In the final part of the ceremony, the names of our deceased shipmates are called out with a shipmate who served with him answering roll call for him.

The ceremony is concluded with the playing of TAPS.

In Memoriam

As you entered the dining room this evening you may have noticed a small table in a place of honor. Please let me explain. The military caste is filled with symbology.

The TABLE is set for one - allow that "one" to represent all of our brothers who are not with us tonight.

The TABLECLOTH is white - symbolizing the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. **REMEMBER!**

The single ROSE in the vase reminds us of the families who loved them. **REMEMBER!**

The RED RIBBON tied so prominently on the vase symbolizes the closeness that we shared. **REMEMBER!**

A slice of lemon is on the plate symbolic of their bitter fate. **REMEMBER!**

There is salt upon the bread plate - symbolic of their family's tears. **REMEMBER!**

The GLASS is inverted - they cannot toast with us this night. **REMEMBER!**

The CHAIR is empty - they are not here. **REMEMBER!**

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From the President



Another reunion is under our belts and thanks to Marshall and Iris, it was a great one. The food was excellent and the hospitality abundant. From a visit to the Tropiflora exotic plant nursery to deep sea fishing or beachcombing for shells, something was planned for everyone. I think we all enjoyed ourselves whether we were involved in one of the planned activities or just sitting around, bending our elbows and shooting the breeze. We all had a good time renewing old acquaintances and making new ones.

Again, thank you Marshall and Iris for all the planning and hard work you did for the reunion. Hope to see everyone in Vermont next year.

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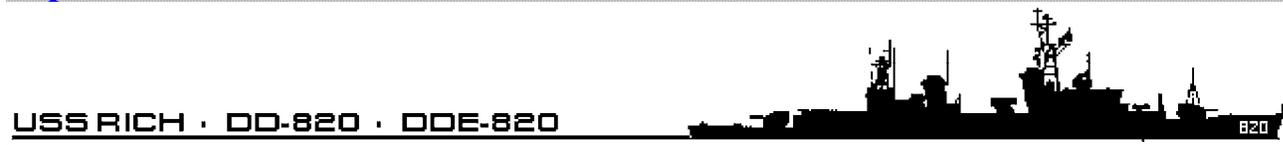
Membership

If you're not a paid up member of the USS RICH DD/DDE 820 ASSOCIATION you should have received a Renewal Notice included with the mailed newsletter. If you did not, you can send you membership dues of \$15.00 to:

USS RICH DD/DDE-820 ASSOCIATION
Walter Becker, Treasurer
1102 Wedgewood Lake Road
Stroudsburg PA 18360-8733

Be sure to include your Name, Mailing Address, Rate, and Tour Dates aboard **RICH**. Please note we do not make our master database available to anyone for any reason. We do, however, provide addresses to other shipmates who may be looking for you.

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Association Board of Directors

2000– 2001 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Johnny Skillen	(64-66)	President	Pine Bluff AR
Charles Weber	(76-77)	Vice President	Albrightsville PA
Larry Dixon	(65-67)	Secretary	Tavares FL
Walter Becker	(55-60)	Treasurer	Stroudsburg PA
Francis Hutchins	(48-55)	Director	Washington VT
LE Beeman	(55-59)	Director	Chocowinity NC
	(60)		

Gary Wilson	(55-62)	Director	Nashville TN
E.R. "Hoot" Gibson	(57-60)	Chaplin	Pinopolis SC
Jerry Dunnigan	(65-67)	Master At Arms	Columbus Grove OH
Don Hogg	(62-64)	Master At Arms	DeQueen AR
Wm "Bill" Billings	(51-55)	Parliamentarian	Key West FL

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