

The 820 Newsletter

World Wide Web Edition



Volume 8, Number 3

August, 2001

In This Issue...

- [Vermont 2001 = SUCCESS!](#)

- [Thursday](#)

- [Friday](#)

- [Saturday morning](#)

- [Saturday evening](#)

- [Scuttlebutt From The Fleet](#)

- [DE 695 Reunion](#)

- [The Rest Of The Story](#)

- [The Olangapo Conflagration](#)

- [Membership](#)

- [Shipmate To Shipmate](#)

- [Return To The Quarterdeck](#)



Vermont Shows Shipmates It Knows How To Host A Reunion

If you weren't there, you missed a great time. **"Hutch"** and **Marie Hutchins** and their able-bodied crew left no detail unattended to insure visiting shipmates of a wonderful reunion in gorgeous Barre, Vermont. Barre, (pronounced Barry) is a scant 20 miles from Burlington, the state capital of Vermont which features an international airport. Barre is one of many neighboring communities in the area located in northwestern Vermont not far from the Canadian border. The mountainous area is green and lush this time of year and has typical northeastern small town atmosphere. The area is also the original home of Ben & Jerry's of ice cream

fame. Many shipmates and their spouses took the tour of the factory.

Thursday, June 14th we were at the Hutchins' farm in nearby Washington, VT for an honest-to-goodness Vermont barbeque. The feast was prepared under the watchful eye of **Marie Hutchins** and crew. Annheiser Busch was very well represented and it was rumored there were soft drinks as well. (Just a rumor.)

Many shipmates enjoyed the informal tour of the Hutchins' country farm home as well as seeing Hutch's miniature Shetland ponies.



Friday found us at an old fashioned barn dance!



According to locals, this once working dairy barn became their “civic center”. A solid wood floor was one of the few necessary improvements necessary (apart from a good cleaning) and remains nearly the way it’s been since it was built. Our live band found their place in the hayloft and dance we did!

Once again, **Marie** and her crew provided a sumptuous buffet. Fortunately, it was a cool evening. After all, who ever heard of an air-conditioned barn?

No complaints about the porta-potties either!

Saturday morning the annual association business meeting was held. The general membership approved the following:

- Memorial display aboard USS Joseph P Kennedy (DD 950)
- Donation to Tin Can Sailors Assoc.
- Memorial plaque aboard the USS Nimitz (DD 850)
- Additional funding for the RICH website and *820 Newsletter*
- Approved the date and sites for future reunions
- Re-elected Gary Wilson to a 3 year term as Director



An important cost-saving suggestion was made regarding the 820 Newsletter. This extended, color edition of the *820 Newsletter* is available about a week earlier than the printed version. Shipmates using this version are notified by email as soon as it's posted to the website.

Paid members may specify they want a printed copy by emailing the [Editor/Webmaster](#) and requesting they be placed on the mailing list for a printed copy. If you are not a paid member we automatically place you on the email list.

Saturday night tends to be bittersweet for many of us as we know we’re just a few hours from saying goodbye once again. Fine food, drink, new and re-newed friendships, laughter, sea stories, sharing memories of our life aboard ship, a lively auction, pictures of kids and grandkids, exchanging e-mail (or snail mail) addresses... these are all a part of what our reunions are all about.



[Click Here For All Reunion Photos](#)



Lest we never forget those who went before us

An advanced detail is already at work!
Dave and Mary Beth Dore are busy making all
preparations in Beaufort. **Click the image for details**



**APRIL
17-21**

[Top](#)

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◆ [Scuttlebutt From The Fleet](#)

◆ [DE 695 Holds Reunion](#)

USS Rich (DE 695) Survivors Association held another successful reunion. This year they were in Branson, Missouri. Their newsletter reported they have found another survivor of their crew in Florida. The city of Branson proclaimed June 8th to be USS Rich Survivors Reunion Day. [...more](#)

◆ [The Rest Of The Story](#)

[LTjg] [Jim Chester](#) (66-69) relates "While RICH was on station on north SAR, a top secret Air Force "Fire Bee" flamed out and soft landed in the Tonkin Gulf. We picked it up on our boat davit and delivered it to Da Nang never to see or hear about it again. A couple of years ago my wife and I were at the Air Force museum in Dayton, Ohio looking at the SR-71 Blackbird. As I was looking around I saw a Fire Bee hanging from the ceiling and said "That looks like the one that we picked up in 'Nam". As I was saying that, she was reading the sign below and exclaimed "It is!" So now everyone knows what happened to it. To quote news commentator Paul Harvey, "...and that's the rest of the story."

◆ [The Olangapo Conflagration](#) (As recalled by CT(RM)SN [Pete Imandt](#), [1968])

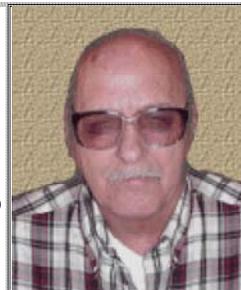
After thirty plus years of secrecy, the following story may now be told:

During the early stages of the RICH's 1968 Southeast Asia deployment, the radio crews worked in three watches. Each was supervised by an RM2. The senior RMs, [Chief Raymond L. Parsons](#) and RM1 [Richard Dilworth](#) were day workers and stood other watches. Later in the cruise, with decreased manpower and increased traffic, the RMs were rearranged into port and starboard watches. During the less hectic early stages of the cruise, RMC Parsons took on the additional duties of editor/publisher of the ship's newsletter, the *Tonkin Times*. Production was simple. There was an old teletype that was too slow for the fleet broadcasts; however, it could print the slower wire service broadcasts. It was usually tuned to a civilian news service. The duty radiomen would keep the frequency dialed in and the printed paper neatly rolled-up. If the receiver drifted, the old machine did as any machine would do, it printed garble. This was not unusual since the set was not watched as closely as the RMC would have wished. Chief Parsons, who frequently rose early, would get to Radio Central

about halfway into the mid watch. It was an easy task for him, using Radio Central's new reprographic gear, to turn selected news items into the *Tonkin Times*.

On my watch section, we were supervised by a no nonsense, squared away, RM2. It is best he remain unnamed. OC Division members will remember him because he slept with one eye open due to a lid injury. This was a problem when it was time rouse him. You couldn't tell if he was awake. While in deep sleep he could look you right in the eye.

During one mid watch this RM2 pulls a stunt totally out of character. He casually makes himself comfortable at the old teletype. He tweaks the receiver to causes garble and then he starts typing like crazy. After a while he is satisfied with his work and he sets the rig back to the civilian news broadcast. He then returns to his normal duties. Soon after that, RMC Parsons enters. "Anything interesting on the wire service tonight?" he asks the RM2. "Don't know, Chief," he replies, "we've been too busy to look. Sorry, there may be some garbles." Parsons settles in and looks for stories for his newsletter. It doesn't take long before he jumps up clamoring, "Hey, look here, you're not going to believe this." He excitedly passes around, for all to read, an item from the wire service. There on the roll, where the chief is pointing, is the RM2's handywork. It is a flawless reproduction



Ray Parsons,
RMC (Ret)
June 2001

of a standard news item. It reports there has been a major fire in Olangapo City (the infamous liberty town adjacent to NavBase Subic Bay). It's a great disaster - - a genuine conflagration - - all the bars and brothels have burned to the ground - - all the "entertainers" have departed - - all liberty has been canceled. The message describes the loss of life and property. Just as it starts to get into the minor details, it disintegrates into the all too familiar garble. None of us dared inform the chief he had been cleverly hoaxed.

Since RICH will soon return to Subic, the chief thinks he has a hot story. He gets out an edition of *Tonkin Times* before the watch changes. As Parsons departs to spread the news, the RM2 gives the watch his typical dead pan look. I'm not sure, but I think there was a slight wink from his good eye.

Returned to Subic, at first liberty call, I was sharing a cab ride with RM1 Dilworth. The native cabby asks if Dilworth wants to go to Olangapo City. Dilworth says, "No, I don't want to go to Olangapo. It all burnt to the ground. Take me to the Acey-Ducey Club. No women tonight." "What fire?" says the cabby, "You crazy. There no fire, everything A-OK, let's go Olangapo." Dilworth responds, "No, no, you're just trying to rip me off for the extra fare. Take me to the Acey-Ducey. No women tonight."

[Top](#)

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[Membership](#)

If you're not a paid up member of the USS RICH DD/DDE 820 ASSOCIATION shame on you! C'mon... be a part of this great organization. It's fun, nostalgic and enlightening. Send your 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.

Guess what? **Now you can [join or renew ONLINE](#) at our website using your credit card.**

Know what? You'll sleep better knowing you're a member.

[Top](#)

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[Shipmate To Shipmate](#)

I believe my dad served on the USS Rich in the early 60's. He died when I was 12 but would like to know if anyone remembers him. He was a cook. His name was **James F. Nolan Jr.** I remember seeing pictures he sent my mom with a sailor with the nickname Baby Huey. Please, if you remember my dad, please email me. There's a time in his life he wasn't able to tell me about. Thank you. [Maureen Nolan](#) *

Looking for **Rex Fite** (MM3), **Paul Fleetwood** (MM2), and **Rick Pazic** (FN) who were part of the onboard band, "The Richmen" during the 65-66 Med Cruise. I recall Fite & Fleetwood were from Kentucky. [Horace Barnes](#) BT1 *

Looking for a copy of the **Chronological Record of the '68 Westpac Cruise** that was placed in our Personnel Jacket. [David Vandemore](#) RM1 *

* US Mail addresses available on request

[Top](#)

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