

The 820 Newsletter

World Wide Web Edition



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Nimitz Museum Place Dedication Set Mid-September Ceremony Planned

Association President Johnny Skillen announced the date for the dedication ceremony for the **USS RICH** Memorial Plaque at the Nimitz Museum in Fredricksburg, Texas.

The ceremony will take place at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 12, 2002. All members and former crew members are invited to attend. If you intend to attend the ceremony, please contact Johnny at 870-535-3331 or email him at tincanjohnny@aol.com.

The un-official **RICH** Quarterdeck will be located at the Peachtree Inn and Suites in Fredricksburg. A number of shipmates have already made reservations for September 11 & 12th.



You can contact the motel toll-free at 1-800-843-4666.

According to their web site, "This is one of Fredericksburg's first motels built in the '40's and restored to maintain the charm of the period with all the comforts of home." The price is right... 2 people - \$45.00 + tax weekdays and \$55.00 + tax on weekends.

The plaque was authorized by the General Membership in June, 2001 to serve as a permanent memorial to all the sailors who crewed the **RICH** making her one of the finest destroyers in Naval history.

[TOP](#)

USS RICH · DD-820 · OOE-820



Old Chiefs

During his career, he was not always the best sailor, but he was a normal teenager growing into an adult. He had to be schooled through the "School of Hard Knocks" like all of us that finally became a Chief Petty Officer in the U.S. Navy.

One thing we weren't aware of at the time but became evident as life wore on, was that we learned true leadership from the finest examples any lad was ever given, Chief Petty Officers.

They were crusty bastards who had done it all and had been forged into men who had been time tested over more years than a lot of us had time on the planet.

The ones I remember wore hydraulic oil stained hats with scratched and dinged-up insignia, faded shirts, some with a Bull Durham tag dangling out of their right-hand pocket or a pipe and tobacco reloads in a worn leather pouch in their hip pockets, and a Zippo that had been everywhere. Some of them came with tattoos on their forearms that would force them to keep their cuffs buttoned at a Methodist picnic. Most of them were as tough as a boarding house steak.... a quality required to survive the life they lived. They were and always will be, a breed apart from all other residents of Mother Earth.

They took eighteen year-old idiots and hammered the stupid bastards into sailors. You knew instinctively it had to be hell on earth to have been born a Chief's kid. God should have given all sons born to Chiefs a return option. A Chief didn't have to command respect. He got it because there was nothing else you could give them. They were God's designated hitters on earth.

We had Chiefs with fully loaded Submarine Combat Patrol Pins in my day... hard-core bastards, who found nothing out of place with the use of the word 'Japs' to refer to the little sons of Nippon they had littered the floor of the Pacific with, as payback for a little December 7th tea party they gave us in 1941. As late as 1970 you could still hear a Chief Petty Officer screaming at you in boot camp to listen to him, because if you didn't, the damn gooks would kill us. They taught me "In those days, 'insensitivity' was not a word in a sailor's lexicon". They remembered lost mates and still cursed the cause of their loss... And they were expert at choosing descriptive adjectives and nouns, none of which their mothers would have endorsed.

The rare times you saw a Chief topside in dress canvas, you saw rows of hard-earned worn and faded ribbons over his pocket.

"Hey Chief, what's that one and that one?"

"Oh Hell kid, I think it was the time I fell out of a hookers bed, I can't remember. There was a war on.

They gave them to us to keep track of the campaigns we had in our country. We got our news from AFVN and Stars and Strips. To be honest, we just took their word for it. Hell son, you couldn't pronounce most of the names of the villages we went. They're all gee-dunk. Listen kid, ribbons don't make you a Sailor."

"The Purple one on top? ok, I do remember earning that one. We knew who the heroes were and in the final analysis that's all that matters."

Many a night we sat in the after mess deck wrapping ourselves around cups of coffee and listening to their stories. There were lighthearted stories about warm beer shared with their running mates in corrugated metal hooches at rear base landing zones, where the only furniture was a few packing crates and a couple of Coleman lamps. Standing in line at a Philippine cathouse, spending three hours soaking in a tub in Bangkok or smoking cigars and getting loaded. It was our history. And we dreamed of being just like them because they were our heroes. When they accepted you as their shipmate, it was the highest honor you would ever receive in your life.

At least it was clearly that way for me. They were not men given to the prerogative of their position. You would find them with their sleeves rolled up, shoulder-to-shoulder with you in a stores loading party.

"Hey Chief, no need for you to be out here tossin' crates in the rain, we can get all this crap aboard."

"Son, the term 'All hands' means all hands."

"Yeah Chief, but you're no damn kid anymore, you old fart."

"Shipmate, when I'm eighty-five, parked in the old Sailors' home in Gulfport, I'll still be able to kick your worthless butt from here to fifty feet past the screw guards along with six of your closest friends."

And he probably wasn't bullshitting. They trained us. Not only us, but hundreds more just like us. If it wasn't for Chief Petty Officers, there wouldn't be any U.S. Naval Force. There wasn't any fairy godmother who lived in a hollow tree in the enchanted forest who could wave her magic wand and create a Chief Petty Officer. They were born as hotsacking seamen and matured like good whiskey in steel hulls and steaming jungles over many years. Nothing a nineteen year-old jaybird could cook up was original to these old saltwater owls. They had seen E-3 jerks come and go for so many years, they could read you like a book.

"Son, I know what you are thinking. Just one word of advice. DON'T. It won't be worth it."

"Aye, Chief."

Chiefs aren't the kind of guys you thank. Monkeys at the zoo don't spend a lot of time thanking the guy who makes them do tricks for peanuts. Appreciation of what they did and who they were, comes with long distance retrospect. No young lad takes time to recognize the worth of his leadership. That comes later when you have experienced poor leadership or lets say, when you have the maturity to recognize what leaders should be, you find that Chiefs are the standard by which you measure all others. They had no Academy rings to get scratched up. They butchered the King's English. They had become educated at the other end of an anchor chain from Copenhagen to Singapore. They had given their entire lives to the United States Navy. In the progression of the nobility of employment, CPO heads the list.

So, when we ultimately get our final duty station assignments and we get to wherever the big CNO in the sky assigns us. If we are lucky, Marines will be guarding the streets. I don't know about that Marine propaganda bullshit, but there will be an old Chief in an oil-stained hat, a cigar stub clenched in his teeth and a coffee cup that looks like it contains oil, standing at the brow to assign us our bunks and tell us where to stow our gear...

And we will all be young again and the damn coffee will float a rock.

Life fixes it so that by the time a stupid kid grows old enough and smart enough to recognize who he should have thanked along the way, he no longer can. If I could, I would thank my old Chiefs. If you only knew what you succeeded in pounding in this thick skull, you would be amazed. So thanks, you old casehardened unsalvageable son-of-a-bitches. Save me a rack in the berthing compartment.

*Contributed by
Horace Barnes, BTC (65-66)*



Navy Rib Ticklers

This is the actual radio conversation of a US naval ship with Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October 1995.

CANADIANS: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the south to avoid a collision.

AMERICANS: Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision.

CANADIANS: Negative. You will have to divert your course 15 degrees to the south to avoid a collision.

AMERICANS: This is the captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

CANADIANS: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

AMERICANS: This is the Aircraft Carrier US LINCOLN, the second largest ship in the United States Atlantic Fleet. We are accompanied with three Destroyers, three Cruisers and numerous support vessels. I DEMAND that you change your course 15 degrees north. I say again, that's one-five degrees north, or counter-measures will be undertaken to ensure the safety of this ship.

CANADIANS: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

I don't know too much about the fire in the forward fire room. That happened before I came aboard. Placed strategically about the ship were five gallon cans of fire foam material along with the application nozzle (I think).

During the panic one guy was told, in so many words,

"Hey, throw a can of foam down there".

Whereupon he picked up the five gallon can and threw it down the hatch. My wild guess is that it didn't help much. What do you expect from 19 year olds?

from Paul (Swede) Eriksen, ET2, 49-52

Back in the days of sailing ships...all war ships and many freighters carried iron cannons. Those cannons fired round iron cannon balls. It was necessary to keep a good supply near the cannon, but prevent them from rolling about the deck. The best storage method devised was a square-based pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of thirty cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem - how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding/rolling from under the others.

The solution was a metal plate called a "Monkey" with sixteen round indentations. If this plate was made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make, "Brass Monkeys." Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled. Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the cannon balls would come right off the monkey. Thus, it was quite literally, "Cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey!"

And all these years you thought it meant something else!

from Horace Barnes, BT1, 65-66

A young ensign had nearly completed his first overseas tour of sea duty when he was given an opportunity to display his ability at getting the ship underway.

With a stream of crisp commands, he had the decks buzzing with men and soon, the ship had left port and was steaming out of the channel.

The ensign's efficiency has been remarkable. In fact, the deck was abuzz with talk that he had set a new record for getting a destroyer under way. The ensign glowed at his accomplishment and was not all surprised when another seaman approached him with a message from the captain.

He was, however, a bit surprised to find that it was a radio message, and he was even more surprised when he read, "My personal congratulations upon completing your underway preparation exercise according to the book and with amazing speed. In your haste, however, you have over looked one of the unwritten rules --

Make sure the Captain is aboard BEFORE getting underway!"

from Jack Milburn, STG3, 63-65



The Ship's Store Is Open!

Our Online shipmates have been visiting our "remodeled" store since it re-opened in mid-June. Now everyone can visit! We'll stock the most popular items and make "special buys" from time to time. We welcome your suggestions! Please use this form to make your purchases. Also, let us know your interest of the item in the "Pre-Sell" box.



Ball Cap
(One size fits all)

\$10/ea
\$5 shipping

- Navy - Solid back X \$15
- Navy - Mesh back X \$15
- White - Solid back X \$15
- White - Mesh back X \$15



Coffee Mug
(One size fits all)
Use with regular or decaf.
Left or right handed.

\$5/ea
\$5 shipping

- Mug - White 2002 X \$10
- Mug - White 2001 X \$10
- Mug - White 2000 X \$10



Car Tag
(One size fits all)
Fits foreign or domestic

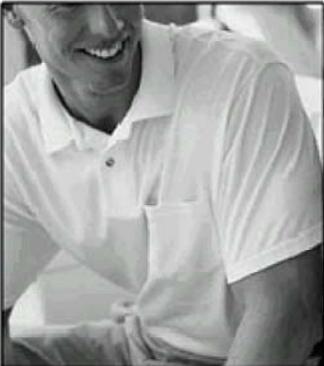
\$10/ea
\$3 shipping

- White w/blue lettering X \$13

PRE-SELL SURVEY

How many will you buy if they are offered?

Embroidered with USS Rich logo 50/50 shirt with pocket
Style may vary. Similar to shirt shown
Estimated cost: \$25 or less including shipping



Specify:

[W]hite	[N]avy	[K]haki
Size	Qty	Color
<input type="checkbox"/> Small	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Large	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> X Large	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 2X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> 3X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SHIP TO:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

- Check
- Money Order
- No COD's
- Allow 3-4 weeks

Please...
NO PHONE CALLS

Send this form and check to:

Don Hogg
USS Rich Ship's Store
1801 N 9th Street
DeQueen, AR 71832



Those were the days...

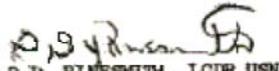
The RICH served her country approximately 11,122 days*. During that period there were days when something exciting or special happened. However, the vast majority of those days were spent as normal, non-eventful days of the ship's routine whether we were in port or at sea. Most of us enjoyed our jobs and our time aboard ship. Most of us. Do you remember this day?

U.S.S. RICH (DDE820) PLAN OF THE DAY

10 February 19XX

UNIFORM OF THE DAY:	C.D.O. LTJG ERICKSON	LIBERTY:
ENLISTED: UNDRRESS BLUE BAKER	OFFICERS DUTY SEC: 2	COMMENCES: 1600
OFF & CPO: Service Dress B.B.	CREW'S MESS:	EXPIRES: 0730 2-11-56 for Sect 1
WORKING: Dungarees	BREAKFAST: MC NEIL MMC	0630 2-13-56 for Sect 2
LIBERTY: Dress Blue Baker	DINNER: LTJG VANOVER	UTY SECTION: 3
	SUPPER: ENS HIMES	STANDBY SECTION 1
		LIBERTY SECTION 2

0530-Reveille for mess cooks.
 0600-Reveille-Coffee in Crews Mess Compt.
 0615-Turn to-Scrub down all weather decks-Muster PAL's & Restricted men.
 0645-Mess Gear.
 0700-Breakfast-Late bunks
 0750-Muster on Stations-Test General & Chemical Alarms.
 0800-Turn to on ship's work. Sick call.
 1000-Inspection of Living spaces by Division Officers-Executive Officers Request Mast.
 1045-Inspection of Food Handlers-OOD & HMC.
 1115-Mess Gear-Knock off ship's work.
 1130-Dinner.
 1245-Turn to. Continue Ship's work.
 1300-All Officers assemble in W.R. Operations Briefing LTJG ERICKSON.
 1400-Mail and Guard Mail Trip.
 1430-Knock off ship's work. Sweepers-Empty all compartment trash cans.
 1440-All Hands shift into uniform for Captains Inspection of personnel.
 1445-Quarters for Muster and Captains Inspection.
 1500-Captains Inspection
 1630-All hands shift into uniform of the day.
 1700-Muster and instruct the Duty Damage Control Party and Emergency Assistance
 Detail-Set Condition BAKER-Main Deck and below. OOD Inspect.
 1715-Mess Gear.
 1730-Supper.
 1915-Eight O'clock Reports
 2000-Movie Call.
 -Sweep down movie area
 2200-Taps-smoking lamp our in all Berthing Spaces.


 R.D. RINESMITH, LCDR, USN
 Executive Officer

NOTES:

1. The following is the schedule of the ships movements from the present to 15 JUNE 19XX.

13-17 February Enroute San Juan, Puerto Rico.
 17-19 February At San Juan, Puerto Rico.
 20-21 February Air 2nd Surface Shoots
 22 February At San Juan, Puerto Rico
 23-24 February Small Drone and Shore Bombardment
 25-26 February Enroute Gtmo.
 27-28 February Fire on heavy drone
 29 February-2 March Enroute Norva.
 2-12 March At Norva.
 12-19 March Type Training-Norva
 19 March-2 April Gunfire Support School in Norva and firing at Bloodsworth Is.
 2-15 April Upkeep-Norva
 16-19 April Upkeep-Norva
 30 April-6 May Hunter Killer work-Norva
 7-20 May Type Training Norva
 21-27 May Upkeep, Norva
 28 May-3 June Type Training Norva.
 4-8 June Upkeep-Norva
 9-17 June Naval Cruise for West Pointers-Norva
 18 June-8 July Air Cruise for Middies with TARAWA to Halifax, N.S.

2. The granting of Standbys must be held to a minimum in order to insure that the ship has a fully qualified and competent duty section aboard to handle any eventuality. Those standbys granted will go to the most deserving and dependable personnel. Standby requests must be complete. Every man on board has a Fire Station.

3. Division Officers and Division Petty Officers are to make a thorough inspections of all Division spaces during the day and insure that the ship is properly secured for sea. Head of Department will report the results of inspection to the Executive Officer at Quarters, at 1455.

4. At the completions of Captains Inspection All Hands will assemble on the Fantail for Captains Meritorious Mast in the cases of ALBRIGHT, HMC; BRUNNING, BM1 and CURRY, ENFN.

5. The Uniform for Captain's Personnel Inspection will be:
 For Officers & CPOs: Service Dress Blue Baker.
 For enlisted: Dress Blue Baker without Peacoats.

The day above could have been anyone of those 11,122 days. I presently have a random Plan Of The Day collection that numbers nearly 100 and represents 3 decades... 50's, 60's and 70's. I'd like some from the 40's for flavor and if any of you have some, I'd really appreciate copies. Many of these I've already posted to the website while others await the "transition" from fading paper to permanent electronic media. In reading and preparing each for the Internet, one thing has become abundantly clear: Each one is timeless. Without a date, the reader would find it nearly impossible to assess the actual date of the POD.

I'll post a POD from time to time in the hope you get as much enjoyment in reading them as I have. For me, each one conjures up memories of a day during "my tour". Incidentally, this particular POD was from 10 February 1956.

Here's how I calculated the 11,122 days:

Commissioned 3 July 1946 - 181 days to year end	181
1 Jan 1947 to 31 Dec 1976 - 29 years X 365.24219 days	10,592
1 Jan 1977 to 15 Dec 1977 - 349 days	<u>349</u>
	11,122

TOP

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Something In Common

Here's something you may find interesting: None of the men listed below served aboard the **USS RICH** yet there is a connection between each and some of our shipmates.

Matthew Michael Flocco, Newark, DE

Johnnie Doctor Jr., Jacksonville, FL

Kris Romeo Bishundat, Baltimore, MD

Christopher Lee Burford, Hubert, NC

Robert Randolph Elseth, Vestal, NY

Jamie Lynn Fallon, Richmond, VA

Who are these people and what's the connection? The names are a *partial* listing of the Active Duty US Naval personnel who were killed in the Pentagon attack on September 11, 2001. The connection is the six people shared a hometown with 14 **RICH** sailors. Its a sad connection.

As we approach the first anniversary of the vicious terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the tragedy of Flight 93 in Pennsylvania, each of us will commemorate the day in some way. My family and I will follow the suggestion of a email I recently received":

"At 12 o'clock noon on Wednesday, September 11, 2002 you are requested to stop what you are doing and place your hand over your heart and recite the Pledge of Allegiance quietly to yourself. If you so choose to do so, following the Pledge, say a prayer for our country, our president and the families of the people who died as the result of these atrocities."

TOP

USS RICH · DD-820 · DDE-820



The Day I Was Elvis... (for about 90 seconds)

In 1955, I was stationed in San Diego and our job was to maintain ships in the mothball fleet. We would take them up the coast to shipyards and when they had been worked on, we would bring them back.

We had dropped off a ship in Long Beach and had heard that Elvis was due to make a showing at the Little Compton Theater. This was during the time that he was becoming so famous so we went to see the "dude" because we knew that where Elvis was, there would be lots of girls! So, three of us took a taxi out there. One was in the front seat and two in the back. I was in the backseat, curbside.

As we pulled up, about 100 girls yelled, "THERE HE IS!!!" and started running toward the cab. I was getting out but when I saw the female on-slaught heading my way, I tried to get back in! They were grabbing, pulling, yelling and screaming. I was shocked and confused and tried to pull away from these crazed girls. Then it hit me... they thought I was Elvis!!!

The cab driver said a few choice words which I will not repeat. Then he said, "Those girls think you're Elvis and they are trying to tear my cab apart!" He was more "shook up" than I was! Then the big let-down came. One girl, having a closer look, came to her senses and announced in a loud voice, "That's not him!"

All at once they departed back to the box office to get in line again and await the arrival of the "real" Elvis. It was an very emotional thing being the heartthrob of all those girls one minute and nothing the next! It reminded me of the day I reported aboard the USS Dealey (DE1006). In those days, PO's didn't wear insignias on work uniforms. After checking in and being shown my bunk I went to the 1st Class Lounge and sat down. A big, salty 1st class got up and asked "What are you doing in here? This is the 1st Class Lounge! Get out!" Another PO I had already met came to my rescue. He said " Wait, this is Barnes. He just reported aboard. He's a 1st class PO!" The old salt apologized many times after that but I told him I took it as a compliment that I didn't look old enough to be a 1st Class petty officer.

And I didn't!

Contributed by
Horace Barnes, BTC, USN (Ret.)

