



## FANTAIL GAZETTE II

MAY 2008

### 2008 USS MURRAY REUNION

SEPTEMBER 11 - 13, 2008, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Preparations for this year's reunion are well under way! The reunion, hosted by shipmate Billy Carpenter, will be held on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008, at the Huntsville Downtown Holiday Inn, in Huntsville, Alabama. Double rooms have been reserved for Murray Reunion participants at \$79 (+ taxes) per night, and although quite a few rooms are reserved at this price, they could fill quickly, so reservations should be made as early as possible (but not later than August 13, 2008).

#### Reunion itinerary:

Thursday Sept 11 - - - Arrival in Huntsville, Reunion Registration, Socializing

Friday Sept 12: - - - - Free Day, Socializing, Independent Sightseeing

Saturday Sept 13: - - Morning: Reunion Participants Business Meeting, Evening: Banquet

Sunday Sept 14: - - - - Departure

The hotel hospitality room is reserved for Murray Reunion participants and will be open from 7 a.m. to midnight daily during the reunion. Adult beverages, soft drinks, tea and coffee as well as snacks will be available. The evening banquet will be held from 6 p.m. to midnight on Saturday, and will feature an elegant buffet with a wide selection of dishes and a cash bar.

**COMPLETE AND MAIL YOUR REUNION FORM (LAST PAGE) AND JOIN YOUR SHIPMATES IN SEPTEMBER!**

### HUNTSVILLE, AL

The Huntsville Holiday Inn Downtown offers a free airport shuttle to the hotel according to friendly staff member Brenda! Hours of shuttle operation are 7am to 11pm daily; call 256.533.1400 from the airport and a radio dispatch van will pick you up.

Huntsville offers a wide variety of sights, attractions, shopping, as well as dining and entertainment opportunities to keep you and your guests busy during your visit in September, many within walking distance of the hotel. For more information, call or write the Huntsville/Madison County Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Suite One, 500 Church St., Huntsville, AL; telephone 256.551.2230; email [info@huntsville.org](mailto:info@huntsville.org), or log on to their informative website: <http://www.huntsville.org>

**The 2009 reunion hosted by Alex Dodson is scheduled for September 14 – 17, 2009, in Buffalo, NY, at the Millennium Buffalo Hotel. Further details on this reunion will also be included in the fall 2008 Gazette.**

## **It's Reunion Time** by *President Neil DenBleyker*

Shipmates & Family: It's time to mark your calendars for the 2008 reunion in Huntsville AL on Sept. 11-13, 2008. This will be the only notice. Billy & Pat Carpenter have worked hard to put together this great event. Let's not disappoint them. Let's have a good turnout. If you haven't been to a reunion' you don't know what you are missing. Come and meet with old shipmates and new ones. We are one happy ship and family. Don't lose the form; send it to John Tawney along with your money. Make your own hotel reservations under the USS Murray group to get the rate. Hotel information and reservation form is on page 3 of this newsletter.

This has been a busy year since the last reunion. Billy Houston is still doing a tremendous job finding new shipmates. A lot of new finds have called me along with old shipmates. It is good to hear from every one. I would like to thank everyone who ordered hats and shirts. We have some left and will also have them at the reunion. I also thank those who sent donations for the mailing fund. The mailing fund is getting low so we are accepting donations. Please send them to the Murray Reunion Fund in care of Treasurer John Tawney.

As happy as I am on the new finds, I am also saddened to hear about our departed members. I was really sad to be informed that our shipmate, good friend and past president Bill McCall had passed away. His cancer had returned and the treatments weren't working. Bill was the person responsible for me becoming involved in the reunions and Murray family.

As president for many years, Bill and his wife Anne found old shipmates, printed newsletters and made sure the Murray name would not be forgotten. He called me and asked if I was the DenBleyker who was on the Murray and I said I was on in 57-58. That's when he said he was aboard at that time and I should come to the reunion. I was apprehensive as I did not think I would know anyone. Well he was persistent and kept calling. Finally my wife said let's go. So it was off to Peoria for the 1998 reunion. I was very surprised when I met Bill & Anne and the rest of our shipmates. The rest is history as I have made all reunions since except the one in Portland OR.

Those of you that have attended reunions know what I am talking about. Bill & Anne became really good friends. We kept in touch between reunions. Bill talked a lot about the Murray, shipmates and family. He even named his Dog "Murray". He really helped this Murray Family in more ways than we know. The attendance of reunions grew because of Bill's efforts, from 20 in Norfolk VA in 1989 to an average of 50 shipmates or more since. This is a lot of work, time, and effort. I know that and so do all the rest of our crewmembers. I could go on forever with deeds that Bill did, but he wouldn't like that. I talked to him about 10 days before his passing and I knew it would not be long before he would not be there to give me advice. It seems that once Anne was gone he lost his fighting spirit to conquer his cancer. We talked quite frequently and I will miss that. I know his spirit is going to be with our Murray shipmates and family for a long time. Please come and join the Murray family.

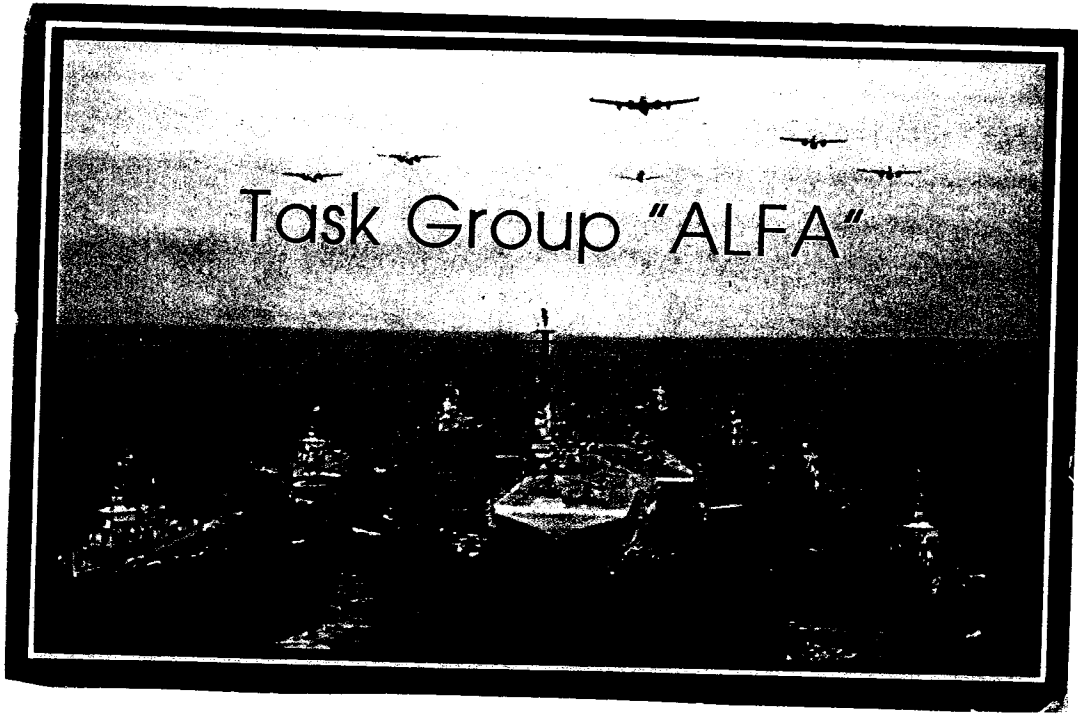
Hope to see you in Huntsville AL  
Neil (Denny) DenBleyker, President

*Ed. Note: Neil sent flowers to Bill McCall's family in the name of the crew of the USS Murray. He received the following reply:*

***Your friendship & camaraderie meant the world to Dad. He so looked forward to the reunions and phone calls from both new and old shipmates! We all delighted in listening to stories both of ship life and shore life. Each and every member of the USS Murray was not only friends but also brothers and sisters to him. If at all possible at this year's reunion would you express our sincere thanks and gratitude to all members for such dear friends to both Mom & Dad? We have only talked to a few of you, but thru our folks we feel as if we know you all.***

***Heartfelt Thanks & Admiration, Steven, Mona and Mitch McCall & Family***

## MURRAY MEMORIES



### TASK GROUP ALPHA

The above picture is from a 1956-57 (?) postcard sent by shipmate George Gustafson. If memory serves me right, this was the anti-sub group formed around the carrier USS VALLEY FORGE. "Gus" says that the USS MURRAY is probably the last ship in line, portside of the carrier. He also shared the following memories: liberty in New Orleans -- Kool Aid, bologna sandwiches, and buckets and pails in rough seas -- ripe laundry bags -- the 10-holer aft latrine. I'll add a few more: 2-minute showers (I still take them that way!) -- Sundays at midnight, standing on a dark wet Roanoke Virginia street corner, trying to hitch a ride back to Norfolk from a 3-day liberty -- a certain ship's cook who put garlic in EVERYTHING he cooked -- a fifth of whiskey stored in a 5" gun mount's barrels (and found during an inspection!) -- beer and softball in Bahrain -- swim call in the Med. Many shipmates shared memories of the January 1961 collision between the USS MURRAY and the carrier USS ESSEX during fueling operations off the Virginia Capes.

**Have some personal memories to share? Please send them to me and let me know if you want your name mentioned.**

### USS MURRAY IN PRINT *(by Tim Shaffer)*

Shipmate William S. Beinecke (gunnery officer on the MURRAY during WWII), wrote and self-published an autobiography, which includes several very interesting chapters of his shipboard experiences. Of perhaps lesser interest to MURRAY shipmates, this 569-page tome also includes his close involvement with the Sperry and Hutchinson Company (S&H Green Stamps).

Bill graciously sent me a copy of this otherwise unavailable book that I would be glad to share with anyone interested in reading about the MURRAY's contribution towards winning the war in the Pacific. Email me at [dd576@comcast.net](mailto:dd576@comcast.net) or send me a postcard to get on the mail list to borrow this book.

## NEW FINDS

Shipmate Billy D. Houston has been busy as usual tracking down old friends and shipmates! Those found since publication of the November 2007 FANTAIL GAZETTE II:

Ronald J CASEY – Henderson, NV; William C. JACKELS – St Louis, MO; Wallace CLANTON - Lakeland, GA; John T LEASE – Cumberland, MD; Robert MAROTTA - Staten Island, NY; Larry FERGUSON – Geneva, OH ; Anthony MOSCA – Orlando, FL; Robert FORSMAN – Round Lake Park, IL; Dale C PEW – Riverside, CA; Arnon GARFIELD – Mona, UT; Ira PLOTKIN – Boynton Beach, FL; William J GUARRO - Fruitland Park, FL; Jerry PROVIN – Sigel, PA; Richard N HEILIGENBERG – Dayton, OH; James WENK – Covington, LA; Stanley R. HUBER - Urbandale, IA; Dietrich WERNER – Cottekill, NY; Bob WILLIAMSON – Fishers, IN; Marion F SEIFERT – Mt Vernon, in

**To ensure receipt of YOUR copy of the FANTAIL GAZETTE II, please keep us advised of address changes!**

Change of mailing address, telephone number and email address can be sent to me, the editor:

Tim Shaffer, 3815 Cheraz Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111-3306, email [DD576@comcast.net](mailto:DD576@comcast.net) or to:

Billy D. Houston, 319 E Farming St., Marion OH; phone 740-382-1474; email [TincanMan61@aol.com](mailto:TincanMan61@aol.com)

## IN MEMORIAM

*The following Murray shipmates have passed on since publication of the November 2007 FANTAIL GAZETTE II:*

BEASON, Lew 2008; BJERKE, Milton 2002; BROWNE, Richard 1/17/2007; CARROL, James J 2007; CLEVELAND, Max 1/12/2007; CREDLE, Staton; CROMBIE, Albert; DEVINNEY, Michael 2006; FRIEL, Paul 1994; GENSBURG, Lanny 1970; HARRIS, Millard F "Tab" 2006; HIGHT, Harold 2006; HOBSON, John 06/2007; KRAESIG, Melbert; MASIONGALE, Owen; MCCALL, William 2008; OSBORNE, Billy 2005; OSET, John 2004; PEARCE, Harrison L 8/18/2006; PRICE, Warren 2005; RASCHE, Frank Otto 2005; RAYLES, Joseph 2001; SHARP, Robert L 10/04/2006; SILER, Lewis 03/2007; SLOMINSKI, Frank M 2007; SMITTLE, Charles 2007; SUCECH, Matthew; SWINDLER, Richard 01/2006; TAYLOR, Warren 2007; TODD, Marvin 2005; TUCKER, Horace; WARE, Larry 2006

*Ed Note: As always, any mistake on this roster is regretted and corrections appreciated. A complete list of departed shipmates, as well as known shipmates is available from the association. Please see the following article.*

## MEMBERSHIP LIST

A complete list of names and addresses of known Murray shipmates as well as names of those already departed will be available in early June by mail from the Gazette II editor. Cost for this will be \$5.00 per copy, postpaid. (Any monies above the cost of the member list go into the newsletter fund). Please contact me, the editor, for copies; make checks or money orders out to me: TIM SHAFFER. Copies will also be for sale at the Huntsville reunion.

SEPTEMBER 11 – 14, 2008

HUNTSVILLE, AL

HOTEL INFORMATION:

>> Please make your own reservations as early as possible – but before August 13 at<<

HOLIDAY INN – DOWNTOWN

401 Williams Ave

Huntsville, AL

Reservations: Mon-Fri 8-5 Telephone 256-533-1401 ext 604 or 605

Or on-line: [reservations@holidayhsv.com](mailto:reservations@holidayhsv.com)

Double rooms are group priced at \$79.00 plus taxes per night; Use group code: **SUM**

----- CUT AND SEND WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER BEFORE AUGUST 1<sup>st</sup> -----

**2008 USS MURRAY REUNION REGISTRATION**

TO: John Tawney, 4611 Chandler Ridge Circle, Raleigh, NC 27603

Phone 919.779.4523 email: [johntawney@mindspring.com](mailto:johntawney@mindspring.com)

Please make checks payable to: **USS MURRAY REUNION FUND**

_____				_____
(Please print) Crew Member's Name		(FOR NAME TAGS)		(Please print) Guest's Name
_____	X	\$10.00	=	\$ _____
Number Attending Registration				
_____	X	\$40.00	=	\$ _____
Number Attending Banquet				
		Total Amount Enclosed	=	\$ _____

**LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN SEPTEMBER!!**