

# FANTAIL GAZETTE II

## NOVEMBER 2008

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### 2008 USS MURRAY REUNION *by President Neil DenBleyker*

The 17th USS Murray reunion hosted by Billy & Pat Carpenter in Huntsville AL is over. I would like to thank all that attended for making this a good one even though the attendance was down. I guess the economy, air fare, and price of gas kept shipmates from attending. Billy & Pat did a wonderful job. The hotel went out of the way to make sure we had a good time. Pat worked very hard making decorations for the tables and banquet guest room. She made it a patriotic theme. The entertainment of singer Lisa Russell and Elvis impersonator (her husband) Jerry Russell was very entertaining. From the comments I received, everyone really enjoyed the evening. Well done Billy & Pat!

Those in attendance were our hosts Billy & Pat Carpenter, Larry & Betty Smalley, Alex & Sue Dodson, Bob & Lynn Gerth, Royce & Mary Rush, John & Linda Connelly, Bill & Mary Tobin, Anne Mourie, Linda Messick, Zander & Nancy Wilke, Myron (Scotty) & Ruth Scott, Daryl Scott, Frank Atkinson, Henry Wehmeyer, Bob & Barbra Westerfield, John & Lynn Eichen, Tony Wochinski, Doug & Nancy Finn, Marvin & Phyllis Seifert, Harold Halterman, John & Jean Tawney, Neil & Cynthia DenBleyker, James Selman and family.

I was asked about attendance of reunions from the past. From the information I have this is the best I could come up with. I do not know how accurate it is.

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|---|---|
| 1987-- Chicago IL -- 20 shipmates           | 2001-- Philadelphia PA -- 40 (74 total) |
| 1989-- Norfolk VA -- no info on shipmates   | 2002-- San Diego CA -- 34 (60 total)    |
| 1991-- Baton Rouge LA -- no info            | 2003-- Branson MO -- 38 (73 total)      |
| 1993-- Kerrville TX -- 50                   | 2004-- Portland OR -- 26 (51 total)     |
| 1995-- Charleston SC -- 50                  | 2005-- Peoria IL -- 28 (50 total)       |
| 1997-- Minneapolis MN -- 44                 | 2006-- Nashville TN -- 26 (50 total)    |
| 1998-- Peoria IL -- 50 shipmates (91 total) | 2007-- Arlington VA -- 43 (85 total)    |
| 1999-- Baton Rouge LA -- 51 (90 total)      | 2008-- Huntsville AL -- 21 (39 total)   |
| 2000-- Colorado Springs CO -- 42 (78 total) |   |

I hope to see more shipmates & family in Buffalo New York in 2009 with Alex & Sue Dodson as our hosts. It will be Sept. 14-18, 2009. It will be at the Millennium Hotel in Buffalo, New York. Tentative schedule is arrival on 9/14, tour Naval Park 9/15, open day 9/16, banquet 9/17, and depart 9/18. There is a lot to do in the area: Niagara Falls, casinos, Canada. Just remember if you plan on visiting Canada you will need a passport.

Also Doug & Nancy Finn are going to host the 2010 reunion. It will be in the New England area. This will be a first for a reunion in that area so mark your calendar and plan to join your shipmates for these reunions.

I would also like to thank Ruth Scott who donated 3 handmade quilts that she made. We auctioned them off and made \$ 175.00 which helped out the mail fund. Also would like to thank those who donated gifts that were raffled. This money went to the mail fund.

Hope everyone is healthy and hope to see you at the next reunion. If anyone has questions, please feel free to contact me.

Neil DenBleyker, 4602 Beef St., Syracuse, NY 13215-8697 Email [Ndenblke@aol.com](mailto:Ndenblke@aol.com)

P.S. We will have more information about the 2009 reunion in the May *Fantail Gazette II*.

## 2008 REUNION PICTURES

I would like to publish photos of the 2008 USS Murray reunion, preferably a good group shot. If you attended – and took pictures of – this event, and would like to share them with us, please forward them (with captions) to me either in an email body, as an attachment, or on a CD. Email can be sent to [ussmurray@gmail.com](mailto:ussmurray@gmail.com), or snail mail to: Tim Shaffer, 3815 Cheraz Rd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111-3306 *Thanks! - Ed.*

## NEW FINDS/ IN MEMORIAM

*Since publication of the May 2008 GAZETTE II, we have 1 new-find and 22 passed shipmates.*

### NEW FIND

Jimmy T Waldrep, (EM 2 – 1955) RT 2 BOX 248, Kirbyville, TX (409) 423-5669

### IN MEMORIAM

BETHARD, TROY 2007; ENSIGN, STEWART 2008; GRUEBL, JAMES 2005; MARTINSON, MARVIN 2008; McBENGE, GEORGE; NEWCOMB, RENFRO C 2003; NUTTER, KENNETH 1997; ORRBEN, CLARENCE 1965; PARRAMORE, DURWARD 1985; PLATZER, WILFORD R 1980; RIPPEON, ELMER 2007; ROHRER, ROBERT 1996; SHADDOX, LONNIE 1981; SUMMERS, BILLY 1992; TALIAFERRO, THOMAS 1996; THINGELSTAD, NORMAN 2007; TOBI, ROBERT 2003; UNDERHILL, COLLEY M 2000; WALLACH, NESTOR 1996; WATROUS, ROBERT 1995; WHITE, FRANKLIN 1985; WILKINS, JESSE 2007

Thanks to shipmate Billy D Houston for this information! Do you have a former shipmate that you would like to locate? Write Billy at 319 E Farming Street, Marion OH 43302-2501, phone him at: 740-382-1474. or email Billy at: [TincanMan61@aol.com](mailto:TincanMan61@aol.com) with as much information as possible about the person you are trying to locate. Include full name, age, home of record at enlistment/commission, and any other information known which might help Billy locate individuals. – *Ed.*

## USS MURRAY CREW LISTING

A printed master list of located Murray shipmates, as well as names of those thought to be already departed is still available from the GAZETTE II editor. Postpaid cost for this list is \$5.00 per copy, and monies above the cost of mailing go into the GAZETTE II mail fund. To order, send a check or money order made out to me, TIM SHAFFER, at 3815 Cheraz Rd NE, Albuquerque NM 87111-3306. As always, any errors or omissions are my responsibility and additions/corrections are appreciated. For your information, there are 624 known members still on the Murray Association mailing list - *Ed.*

## USS MURRAY GAZETTE II CHANGE OF EMAIL ADDRESS

Due to ongoing problems with my present email server COMCAST, I have moved the email address for the USS MURRAY GAZETTE II – effective immediately - to the following address: [ussmurray@gmail.com](mailto:ussmurray@gmail.com) (I will continue to monitor the old address for a while, but please use the gmail address for future emails). – *Ed.*

## USS MURRAY ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB!

Shipmate John Connelly maintains a website where you can find announcements of coming reunions, past reunion photos, a shipmate roster, a good history of the Murray, and other features which continue to expand. Coming soon will be a guestbook where you can post your thoughts and communicate with long-lost shipmates. Log on at:

<http://www.ussmurray.com/>

## USS MURRAY IN FILM

Excerpts from a film made in late 1943 and early 1944 by crewmen of the USS Abbot (DD 629) of destroyer life in the Pacific have been remade into a video. Toward the end of this video is some interesting footage of the USS Murray. The video can be viewed on-line at the Abbot website:

<http://abbot.us/DD629/kiddFilm/movie.shtml?DestroyerLife2bLarge.mp4>

## USS MURRAY SHIP'S STORE

A company by the name of CAFÉ PRESS (JJ-Enterprises of Temple, TX) sent me an *unsolicited* email with two sites where they sell items of interest (shirts, hats, etc.) to Murray (and other ship's) shipmates. They are not affiliated with me, the US Navy, or the USS Murray Association in any way, and I haven't ordered anything from them, so I can't vouch for their business. They have an on-line catalog only, but they will take orders over the phone. For more information about Murray items, log on to the following sites:

FOR USS MURRAY (DD-576) <http://www.cafepress.com/ussmurray>

FOR USS MURRAY (DDE-576) <http://www.cafepress.com/ussmurraydde>

*The above four news items make reference to internet addresses. While it is realized that not everyone among our shipmates has or even wants internet access, this is largely unavoidable today and a sure sign of the times. I apologize for this situation, and hope that those of us without direct internet access can perhaps find some other way to gain access to these sites if desired - from the computer of a friend, relative, or public place such as your local library or senior center. - Ed.*

## MURRAY MEMORIES *by Tim Shaffer*

Joe Koch (Murray 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant and Chief Engineer – '57 to '59) responded to the picture of Task Force Alpha in the May '08 Gazette II and correctly identified the carrier in that picture as the USS Randolph CVS-15, not the USS Valley Forge as I had assumed. Joe went on to write some interesting details about Task Force Alpha, the Murray, and his duties on board. One humorous excerpt – printed with his permission: "MURRAY was alongside the pier in Norfolk when I reported aboard. My second or third day aboard BMC Spain, who ran the deck force, asked me to join him in the Chief's Quarters for a cup of coffee after Quarters. It was 51 years ago, but I still remember what he had to say to me. I received Spain's speech number 1 for new Ensigns. It went like this: 'Mr. Koch, sir, if you will listen to me, sir, I will teach you

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Murray memories (continued)

*everything you need to know, sir, and we will run a good Division, sir.' I told Chief Spain that I thought we would get along just fine. I was a green newly commissioned Ensign. Spain had been promoted to BMC during World War II. Spain taught me many things and we did run a good organization. He started me off properly in my career as a Naval Officer!!! Every new Ensign needs to work with a seasoned Chief like BMC Spain!!!"*

A memory of mine which concerns Mr. Koch: I didn't remember him until he mentioned in his emails that he had been the 3 inch 50 battery officer, and as such had spent GQ in the aft gun director. As director operator, I sat in front of him, and we both held down a trigger when the battery fired. The 3"50s would fire anywhere they were pointed, except of course at the director, bridge, mast, or stacks - a cam in the mounts interrupted the firing circuit when the line-of-fire came too close to one of these. During one live-fire drone exercise, the rotating forward mount started firing uncomfortably close to the director, giving us a pretty wild ride, and if I remember correctly, blowing the director hatch off! We had already scored several sleeve-bursts [which meant good hits], and all things considered, it seemed like a *really* good time to let go of my trigger. I did, and we ceased firing just as the gun barrel trained right on the director. Afterward, I checked out the cams to see if they would have interrupted as advertised. They didn't - the cam switches on both mounts were frozen shut, allowing the mount to fire anywhere - a few more degrees to left and we would literally have been toast that day! I don't think that I ever mentioned this event to Joe or anyone else.

## **USS MURRAY – PROBABLY 1943-44**

*(Thanks to John Tawney for this picture).*

