

## USS HOLT (DE 706)

**“HOLT HAPPENINGS”** ....A Newsletter for and about the crew of the ship and their families.

Vol. XII, No 2

**MAY 2002**

### REUNION NEWS

The reunion in Jacksonville was a great success. We had a total of 65 in attendance, which was more than we had in Hampton, VA two years earlier.

Events seemed to flow better this time. The hotel accommodations were very good. The tours went off without any problems. We did not get any complaints about the food at the banquet and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. All this made for a good time.

We were glad to have two of our shipmates attend for the first time....Bob Cooper and his wife, Ida Mae who live in Jacksonville. For those with failing memories, Bob was the ship's mailman. He was always the first ashore when we came into port and the last aboard as we sailed (the lucky rascal)! Al Bogan (Gunner's Mate), his wife Evelyn and daughter, Kathleen, surprised us with their arrival on Friday. There's an interesting story connected with this. Paul Pickett had a phone call from London, England a couple of weeks prior to the reunion and the lady on the other end wanted to know if it was too late to register for the reunion. Paul said no, and since she stated she had the registration form, he did not get her name.

In a subsequent telephone conversation with Bill Morgan, it was decided that it was one of the wives of a crew member who happened to be visiting England and that we would receive the application in due course. Nothing further until the Bogan's showed

up! Kathleen is the lady who called. She is Dr. Kathleen Bogan who teaches at Oxford University. She is interested in writing the story of the USS HOLT and we have agreed to furnish her with the raw data. What a delightful person and we look forward to working with her on this project.

We welcomed a few guests...Oak Ramsey's grandson who lives in the area came by and Bill Morgan's brother & sister-in-law and their son also came by.

The tour of the USS BOONE (FFG 28) at Mayport was very interesting. A frigate is the nearest thing to a destroyer escort the navy has these days. I forget the length of the ship, but her beam was 62 feet...almost twice the width of the HOLT. The ship's firepower is awesome and she can attain a speed of 30 knots on one screw. Maneuvering is made easier by an autopilot and bow and stern thrusters. The navy sure has changed. Three chiefs and one second class are qualified as officer-of-the-deck underway! No engine order telegraph. Control of the main engine is from the bridge with a throttle very similar to that found in the cockpit of a modern airliner. The helmsman sits in a comfortable seat and the wheel is about four inches in diameter. There still is a rudder angle indicator. They "practice" taking star sights on occasion, however, the continuous position is read out from a Global Positioning Satellite.

We had lunch on the base at the Officers Club. The food, while good, could have been a little warmer. This may have been caused by the fact they are accustomed to people serving themselves from the buffet and we had a seated luncheon.

The next day, we toured St. Augustine, a charming old city dating back to the early Spanish settlers. After a good lunch and a tour of the local chocolate factory (samples were very tasty), we returned to our hotel.

The last day, Saturday, there were no planned activities, which gave everyone an opportunity to loaf by the pool, visit downtown Jacksonville, play golf or visit in the hospitality room. We had a photo session prior to the banquet. No professional photographer, but a host of good amateurs! **We will attempt to publish a photo memory book similar to those of the past, but will need your photos. So please send a spare print or two that would go well in the booklet. Especially need a good one of the groups, ie, the shipmates, the ladies and the children/grandchildren, however, any unreturnable photo will be appreciated.**

A big thanks to all of those who brought "goodies" to the reunion. The hospitality room had a table loaded with cookies, candies and other goodies. One day, we even had mounds of shrimp with a delicious cocktail sauce and a liver pate. (Thank you, Lois Steinhauser).

We always have a raffle item at the reunion. This is one of our prime ways of raising the necessary funds for the expenses incurred in mailings, etc. This year we

decided on a rather expensive cast bronze ship's bell 5 ½" in diameter and about six inches high. Cast into the bell was the ship's name and number. We raised about \$300 more than the bell cost (\$350). Thanks to all of you who purchased tickets. We all held our breath when the drawing was made, each hoping his or her number would be the lucky one. The winner was Randolph Cowart and we could not have been more pleased. Randolph's health has been bad for some time, keeping him from the 2000 reunion. He came to this reunion with the aid of his son, daughter, daughter-in-law and a wheel chair. Winning the ship's bell made his day.

Surprises seemed to pop up everywhere. Rod Sutherland, son of Don Sutherland (Sonarman), asked for a couple of minutes on the program after the closing banquet. He said he had a poem about the USS HOLT he wanted to recite. He did and it was a good poem. When he started for the podium, he asked his girl friend, Judi Allen, to come with him. Everyone in the room was delighted at what happened next. Rod proposed to Judi and she accepted.! A nice surprise.

Both Lois and Bill Morgan were surprised at the gifts you gave them. The crystal vanity set is lovely and the gimbaled clock occupies a place of prominence on Bill's desk. It was very thoughtful of you all and much appreciated. Seeing all the shipmates and their families visiting one another, literally, between reunions as well as at the reunions, is compensation enough. When we were young, we were a good crew, and by golly, we still are.

Sandy Oliver and Judy Mansur, daughters of the late Walter Johnson, were also surprised with gifts from the crew. They made and furnished the jewelry items that were in the grab bags. Also, Judy has made everyone of the brass name plates that adorn our Deceased Shipmate Boards. She also serves as an advisor on ladies activities and a sounding board when the planning gets serious. Our thanks to both these ladies. WELL DONE.

### **OTHER**

We just learned of the death of Joseph "Pete" Conti (Water Tender). He passed away on 8 March 2001. The card we signed and sent to him from the reunion was returned, marked "Deceased". A call to the nursing home got the date, but they would not give us the names or addresses of any relatives. They did contact Pete's nephew and he called, promising to give us the necessary data to enroll Pete in the Navy Log if he could locate the data.

Ruth Stout (Wife of Bayard Stout, Quartermaster) called to wish us a good reunion and expressed regrets that she did not quite feel up to attending, but to give her sincere thanks to all those who wrote, sent cards and called when they heard of Stout's death last year. She also honored the crew with a \$500. contribution to our operating fund for which we are very grateful. Thank you Ruth for your thoughtfulness.

Also, a big thanks to Bill Ensley for his generous contribution of \$100 to the operating fund.

In the past, when a shipmate passed away and we knew about it in time, we would send flowers for the funeral. We recently adopted a new approach. When a shipmate passes away, we intend to list him in the Navy Log maintained by the U. S, Navy Memorial, Washington, DC. To make the listing, we will need a photo of the shipmate in uniform; his date of birth and date of death; the date he entered the Navy and the date of his discharge as well as his major duty stations. We think this is a fitting tribute to our shipmates, one which will be around for a very long time. Anyone visiting the Navy Memorial can go to the log room and quickly pull up the information on a computer screen. Anyone in the world who has access to the internet can access the Navy Log and view the same data. In this manner, we are leaving a legacy for future generations to know a little about us.

A year or so ago, we saw an ad in a magazine about a line drawing photo of a destroyer escort. The cost seemed reasonable, so we ordered a print. Turned out to be very nice and, framed, makes a nice wall hanging. The size is approximately 11 1/5 x 19". We are enclosing an order form should you desire a copy. If you do order, be sure to specify the name of the ship (USS HOLT) and hull number (DE 706) and also state that it is a RUDDERROW class destroyer escort. That way they will be sure to get the proper data. At the bottom of the photo is all the general information about the ship....size, armament, speed, builder, displacement, etc.

### **BINNACLE LIST**

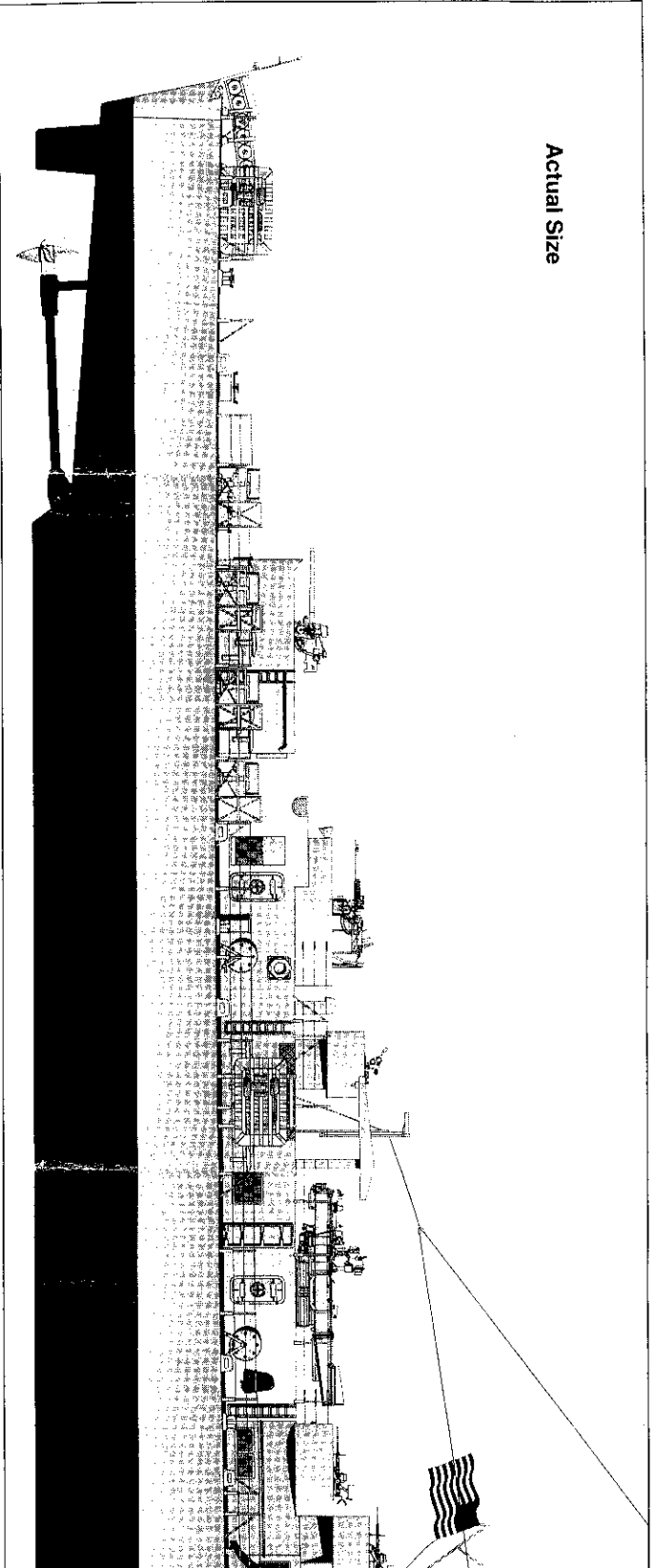
The list of shipmates and their spouses who are ill is quite extensive. We list here those that are ill or have been ill recently. Most would have attended the reunion had their health permitted. If there are others, please let us know.

Kess Adams, Ed Bouchard, Russ Coates, Fred Davis, Bob DeAngeles, Sue Eazer (Wife of Ted Eazer), Don Fredette (Don attended but had surgery later), Marshall Gebert, Harry Helgeson, Ginny Manville (Wife of Chief Quartermaster Jack Manville), Ralph Parks, Jerri Pickett (Wife of Paul Pickett - she attended), George Reimers, Bob Swartz, Frank Shepherd, Leonard Thompson and Arch & Charlotte West.

That's a lengthy list for sure. If I have missed anyone, please let us know. Let's all keep each of them in our prayers for speedy recoveries.

Until next time, Fair Winds.

Actual Size



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