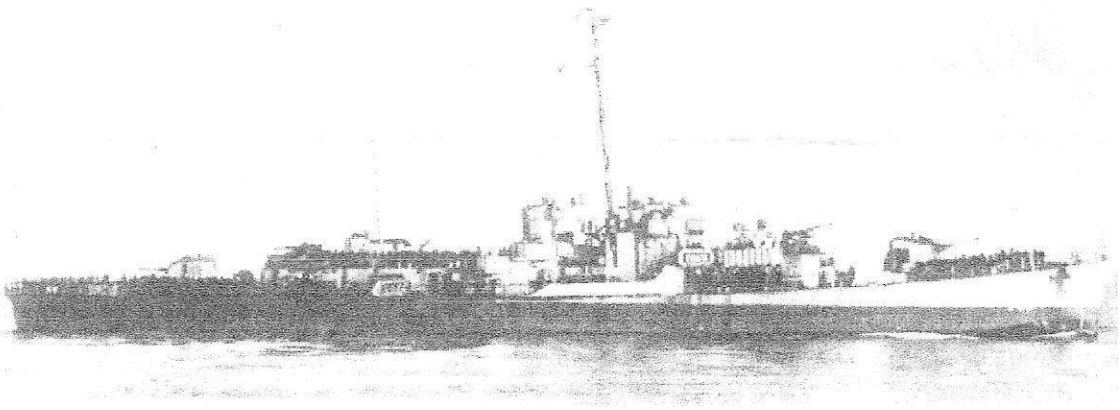
HOLT HAPPENINGS

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE CREW AND THEIR FAMILIES



June 2006

VOL XVI; No.2

THE REUNION

Fifteen shipmates with wives, children, grandchildren and friends, a total of 54 persons gathered at the Hilton Hotel in Arlington, VA on April 27 - May 1 for a fun-filled time. We took a tour of the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD and visited the beautiful Navy Chapel where the Father of the American Navy, John Paul Jones, is entombed. We also had a look inside Bancroft Hall. This huge building houses the entire corps of midshipmen and has a dining hall that seats all 4000 of them simultaneously. Class room space is included in this building.

The next day, we took a tour of the White House. This was a last minute add-on. The idea came up in early 2005, but we were told that tours of the White House were nearly impossible since the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Thanks to Rep Pete Sessions (my Congressman from Texas), he was able to make the arrangements, but only at the last minute. We purposely kept this part under wraps as we did not want to get a lot of excitement aroused, then have it fall through. Our time line was very strict as we already had the other parts of the tour set-up. We scrambled to contact all reunion attendees to get the required personal identification required by the Secret Service prior to entering the White House. It is a truly magnificent edifice. We got to visit about 6 of the main public rooms on the ground floor (but not the oval office). Then we proceeded to the Navy Memorial down Pennsylvania Avenue about halfway between the White

House and the Capitol for a most impressive wreath laying ceremony honoring our deceased shipmates, especially those who have died in the last two years. Commander Marvin Howard (brother of our Garnett Howard), a retired Navy Chaplain, gave the invocation, then the names of the deceased shipmates since the last reunion (14 of them) were read and a bell was tolled in each one's honor. Following the Star Spangled Banner, a welcoming address by a Navy Memorial official and posting of the colors by the Washington Naval Detachment of Sailors, Garnett Howard and Paul Pickett laid the wreath in front of the Lone Sailor Monument. The ceremony was closed by the playing of taps by a member of the U. S. Navy Band.

On our arrival date, we had a "get re-acquainted" informal dinner. On Sunday evening, April 30th, we had our closing banquet, complete with some unexpected awards and some good-natured fun poked at Karl Nease by Lois Steinhauser. She had spent considerable time getting a life size dummy made up, with appropriate attire and Karl Nease's photo pasted on the face for realism. We also presented Karl with the original October 1944 receipt where LT Arch West (who had shore patrol duty in Colon, Panama) bailed him out of the local jail for being involved in an altercation in a restricted area of Colon. Luckily, Arch went by the police station before returning to the ship or Karl may have had a one-way trip to the Panamanian Penal Island located offshore. Arch was successful in negotiating with the authorities, stating that Nease was the only Metalsmith the ship had and we could not get underway without him. Obviously, he was successful.

We honored and surprised Bob Hoover by presenting him with a Ship's Bell with the name of the ship cast into the metal. This is the same bell that we have used in the past for raffle drawings. Bob was surprised and pleased. He deserved it as he had expended so much energy and time in 1944 getting a bell for the HOLT. I don't think Captain Blue would have sailed without the ship's bell. (See the story in an earlier HOLT Happenings Newsletter)

Yours truly was pleasantly surprised with the gift of a Lone Sailor Statue given by those in attendance . This was from the Navy Memorial. It sits proudly atop a file cabinet alongside my other Navy memorabilia. Thanks everyone, for your generosity. It is sincerely appreciated.

Due to our advancing years, and tightening of the rules by the big hotels, we had expected this to be our last reunion. But, in a crew meeting to discuss this situation, we decided to scale it back and plan one for later in the year of 2008. The consensus was to go to a smaller hotel/motel where we would not have to make guarantees on rooms, etc. We would not plan on any group tours nor would we have a scheduled banquet. We would gather in a city for 2 or 3 days, have a hospitality room, take local available tours as desired, and get together at a restaurant with a private dining room for our closing dinner. There are a number of sites where this would be feasible and fun. More on that later.

Friday & Saturday evenings we played Bingo and everyone seemed to have a good time despite the fact there were no big prizes, just knick- knack kinds of things.

BINNACLE LIST

Several of our reunion group were under the weather, just recovering from hospital stays or other illnesses. These included Al Gebauer, Paul Pickett and Don Fredette. Oak Ramsey missed the reunion for the first time due to health problems. He sends his best regards to all.

Remaining on the binnacle list are Fred Lear, Ralph Parks, Frank Shepherd, Harry Helgeson, Ted and Sue Eazer, Phil Corriher, John Coward, Phil Defosses, Fran Clearo and Bob Swartz. Our thoughts and prayers are with these shipmates.

SHIPMATE AND SPOUSES DEATHS

Joan Decker, the wife of Jay Decker, passed away in April. She had been ill with cancer for quite some time, yet her spirit and outlook were very upbeat. We spoke with her just a couple of weeks before her death and she was exuberant about attending the HOLT reunion. She was always a cheerleader for the HOLT group. Our sincere sympathy to Jay and his family upon the passing of Joan.

A couple of months ago, we learned of the death of Joe Dancho (2005 passing). His son also said Joe's wife, Val passed away a couple of years earlier. Joe and Val attended the 2000 reunion in Hampton, VA. During our service aboard HOLT, Joe, a Signalman and Myself, a Quartermaster stood many watches together. He was a good shipmate and will be missed.

IN HONOR OF:

In this issue of the *HOLT HAPPENINGS* we honor two ladies that have worked tirelessly in helping to make the reunions successful. **Judy Mansur** and her sister, **Sandy Johnson-Oliver**, daughters of our deceased shipmate, **Walter Johnson**. They began attending the reunions with their father in 1994 and upon his death, both have continued to honor his memory by attending and working. It is impossible to remember all that these two have done, but here are some examples: Judy has made every one of the nearly 200 brass nameplates that are mounted on the four walnut plaques honoring our deceased shipmates. Each has the name, rate/rank and date of death of the individual. Both have made and purchased numerous small gifts to include in registration packets. They bring"goodies" to share with the attendees in the hospitality room. This year they furnished photo frames (4 x 6) with "USS HOLT REUNION' ENGRAVED across the top and "APRIL 2006"across the bottom. They then took photos of everyone, had them developed nearby and the finished product wrapped for presentation at the closing banquet. Now that is loyalty and dedication of the highest order. Each is always asking "What can I do to help?" Judy and Sandy, please accept our sincere thanks from all your Dad's shipmates and we give you a huge Navy **" WELL DONE".** We love you.

OTHER

At the crew meeting, it was unanimously agreed that we would continue to charge an

annual fee of $20.00 to cover the cost of printing the HOLT Newsletter and the cost of postage. We will send it to everyone on the current list (about 145) through the beginning of next year (2007). At that time, those who have not paid the annual dues will be dropped from the mailing list. We'll remind you again later on.

The annual dues cycle comes up in July, so why not send your dues to Paul Pickett, [redacted] A dues notice is enclosed with this newsletter.

Tom Kiska, and his wife dropped in one afternoon for a visit with his old shipmates. They were on their way to Florida to visit his brother, so only stayed a short time. Sure was good to hear some of his tales from the old Days. Tom, Being a Torpedoman, had a difficult time controlling the inventory of "torpedo alcohol", the stuff that made the torpedoes run. Seems like there was considerable evaporation of this juice! We had the same problem with the alcohol that went into the magnetic compass until a blue dye was inserted that ruined the taste of the juice.

USS HOLT (DE 706) REUNION

April 28 –May 18, 2006

HILTON CRYSTAL CITY HOTEL, ARLINGTON, VA

Boorman, Al & Barbara	Shipmate & Spouse
Cady, Karen	Daughter of Al Gebauer
Cope, Jeff & Dana	Son and daughter-n-law of Glenn & Helen Cope
Cope, Glenn & Helen	Shipmate & Spouse
Cope, Robert	Son of Glenn & Helen Cope
Dettling, Jim	Shipmate
Dettling, Jean	Daughter of Jim Dettling
Fredette, Don	Shipmate
Al & Ann Gebauer	Shipmate & Spouse
Goodman, John	Fiancée of Marie Hale (Al & Barbara Boorman's daughter)
Hale, Marie & sons Tyler & Jeffrey	Daughter & grandsons of Al & Barbara Boorman
Handley, Claudia	Daughter of Clem Thrift
Hester, Debra	Daughter of Clem Thrift
Hightower, Jerry & Debbie	Daughter & son-in-law of Paul Pickett
Hoover, Bob & Ellen	Shipmate & Spouse
Howard, Garnett	Shipmate
Howard, Leslie	Daughter of Garnett Howard

Howard, Marvin W.	Brother of Garnett Howard & retired Chaplain (CDR) USN
Jones, Janice	Friend of Debbie Hightower
Kiska, Tom & Helen	Shipmate & Spouse
Leone, Deborah, Charles & Marin	Daughter, Son-in-law & Granddaughter of Al & Barbara Boorman
Lindstrom, Gregory	Friend of Karen Cady
Mansur, Judy	Daughter of Shipmate Walter Johnson
McGauley, John & Mary Anne	Shipmate & Spouse
Meehan, Jean	Friend of Don Fredette
Meenan, John & Jackie	Shipmate & Spouse
Morgan, Bill & Lois	Shipmate & Spouse
Nease, Karl	Shipmate
Johnson-Oliver, Sandy	Daughter of Shipmate Walter Johnson
Parliman, Rebecca & Andrew	Daughter & Son-in-law of Clem thrift
Pickett, Paul E., Sr	Shipmate
Pickett, Paul E., Jr.	Son of Paul Pickett, Sr.
Soltis, Mary & August	Daughter & Son-in-law of John Steinhauser
Steinhauser, John & Lois	Shipmate & Spouse
Swift, Olive	Spouse of Shipmate Gilbert Swift
Swift, Roger	Son of Olive Swift
Thrift, Clem & Kathyrn	Shipmate & Spouse