

# USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter January - April, 2015, 40th Edition

Welcome to the USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter


The USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter is a publication issued every four months by the USS Plymouth Rock Ships Association. If you would like to contribute an article, a piece of Navy or Plymouth Rock history, photo, memory or anything that might be of interest to you or other shipmates, you can send it as an e-mail to:

Bill Provencal, Association Secretary/Newsletter Editor at:

[billinp@metrocast.net](mailto:billinp@metrocast.net)

or regular mail at:

Bill Provencal  
37 South Main Street  
Pittsfield, NH 03263

 If you change **address** or **e-mail address** be sure to let me (Bill Provencal) know so we can update our Crews List. My e-mail is <mailto:billinp@metrocast.net>, my home address is listed above. We have been getting a lot of returns on our newsletter mailing to you guys who are paid dues members. Our ships website is found at [www.ussplymouthrock.com/](http://www.ussplymouthrock.com/)



## Ships Officers

President  
Tom Wagner  
[tfwagner@wagner-insurance.net](mailto:tfwagner@wagner-insurance.net)  
812-537-9548

Vice President  
Bill Haynie  
864-934-2900  
<mailto:whhaynue@charter.net>

Treasurer  
David Dortch  
870-236-3725  
[tazrhondave@yahoo.com](mailto:tazrhondave@yahoo.com)



★ ★ ★ Welcome Aboard ★ ★ ★

Secretary/Webmaster  
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[billinp@metrocast.net](mailto:billinp@metrocast.net)  
603-435-8603

Ships Historian  
Norm Jepson  
586-755-3814  
[rnjepson@aol.com](mailto:rnjepson@aol.com)

Ships Storekeeper  
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203-753-6220

Reunion Coordinators:  
Bill and Lynn Haynie  
864-934-2900  
<mailto:whhaynie@charter.net>



Phil Hargis, BMSN, 795 County Road 1, lot 212, Palm Harbor, FL On board 8/68-2/70, Phone 727-667-2873, E-Mail Address: [pthargis@gmail.com](mailto:pthargis@gmail.com)

**NOTE: Additional information is available on the Website "Crews Muster List"**



## Information on the Reunion in 2016

I have spoken to Bill Haynie, our Reunion Chairman and he reports that in all indication the 2016 Ships Reunion will be held in Pensacola, FL. The dates are still open but will be in the Fall, either in September or October, 2016. Possibilities for activities include the Naval Air Museum and a practice/show of the Blue Angels. As we acquire more information it will be posted on the website and in the next newsletter in August 2015.



## WRITE AN ARTICLE!

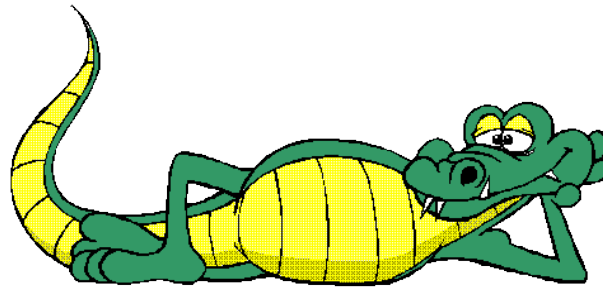


We need your articles and letters to the newsletter editor for publication in our newsletter.

Photographs accompanying articles are much appreciated.

Send your articles to the editor at: [billinp@metrocast.net](mailto:billinp@metrocast.net)





### Recent Address Changes to the Ships Muster List

Tom Gilpatrick, MM3, on board 12/75-1/78. Mailing Address: 104 Pine Heath Rd., Bar Harbor, ME 04609

Peter Nicholl, EM3, on board 77-79. Mailing Address: PO Box 2035, Snoqualmie, WA 98065-2035

Norman Stackhouse, BT2, on board 1/62-11/64, Waretown, NJ Telephone: 609-713-5218

Jerry Guretin, CDR, 75-77, Pensacola, FL. E-Mail Address: [captnav@cox.net](mailto:captnav@cox.net)

Charles Bali, BM3 on board 66-68, Merrillville, IN. Phone number: 219-769-3705

Michael Schneider, LTjg, on board 61-63, Annapolis, MD Phone number: 410-849-5130

Samuel Dalfonzo, EM3, So. Plainfield, NJ. E-Mail Address: [fonzsosp@yahoo.com](mailto:fonzsosp@yahoo.com)

Thomas Hickson, BT3, Milan, IL Phone number: 309-787-7002

Robert Shober, BT3, on board 57-60, Ellenton, PA. E-Mail Address: [clearpool@peoplepc.com](mailto:clearpool@peoplepc.com)

Brandon Macomber, LTjg, on board 68-70, Evergreen, CO Phone Number: 303-674-5253

Richard Cartwright, DK3, on board 52-56 (Plank Owner), Providence, RI. E-Mail

Address: [richardcartwright214@hotmail.com](mailto:richardcartwright214@hotmail.com), Phone Nurber: 401-286-7942

Harry Andersen, BTC, on board 2/68-2/70, Waukegan, IL. E-Mail

Address: [htajma@comcast.net](mailto:htajma@comcast.net)

Bernie Lillig, YN3, on board 65-66, Raytown, MO. E-Mail Address: [blillig@att.net](mailto:blillig@att.net)

Randell Nye, MM3, on board 11/74-5/78. Address: PO Box 1, Broomes Island, MD 20615,

Phone 443-771-3188, E-Mail Address: [randellnye@yahoo.com](mailto:randellnye@yahoo.com)

Bill Walsh, SK2, on board 8/70-9/73, Holt, MI Phone 517-648-3006, E-Mail

Address: [williamwalsh0102@comcast.net](mailto:williamwalsh0102@comcast.net)

Mervin Lucas, Sk3, on board 65-67, New Orleans, LA Phone 504-895-5114

Jack Fisher, QM3, on board 3/61-2/64, Chambersburg, PA E-Mail

Address: [jacnfay@comcast.net](mailto:jacnfay@comcast.net)

Bruce Czarnetski, EMFN, on board 7/61-3/63, Davenport, IA E-Mail

Address: [gcsteel@yahoo.com](mailto:gcsteel@yahoo.com)

Edmund Joyce, PFC, Goffstown, NH on board 4/58-10/58 Phone 603-370-8391

Chris Rose, HT2, on board 3/73-6/76. Address: 1218 Park Lane, Brandenburg, KY 40108, E-

Mail address: [chrisrose1954@gmail.com](mailto:chrisrose1954@gmail.com)



### Known Deceased Shipmates

For a complete listing of deceased shipmates, visit our Memorial Page in the ships website

Robert Warwick, MM2, on board 9/54-2/58, Plank Owner, Deceased December 24, 2014	Rick Roncone, CS3, on board 12/67-6/70, Deceased February 25, 2015
Robert Bouchard, EN1, on board 1/72- 8/72. Deceased August 9, 2014	Jack Morton, SN, on board 57-60. Deceased October 24, 2014



## Paid Membership List

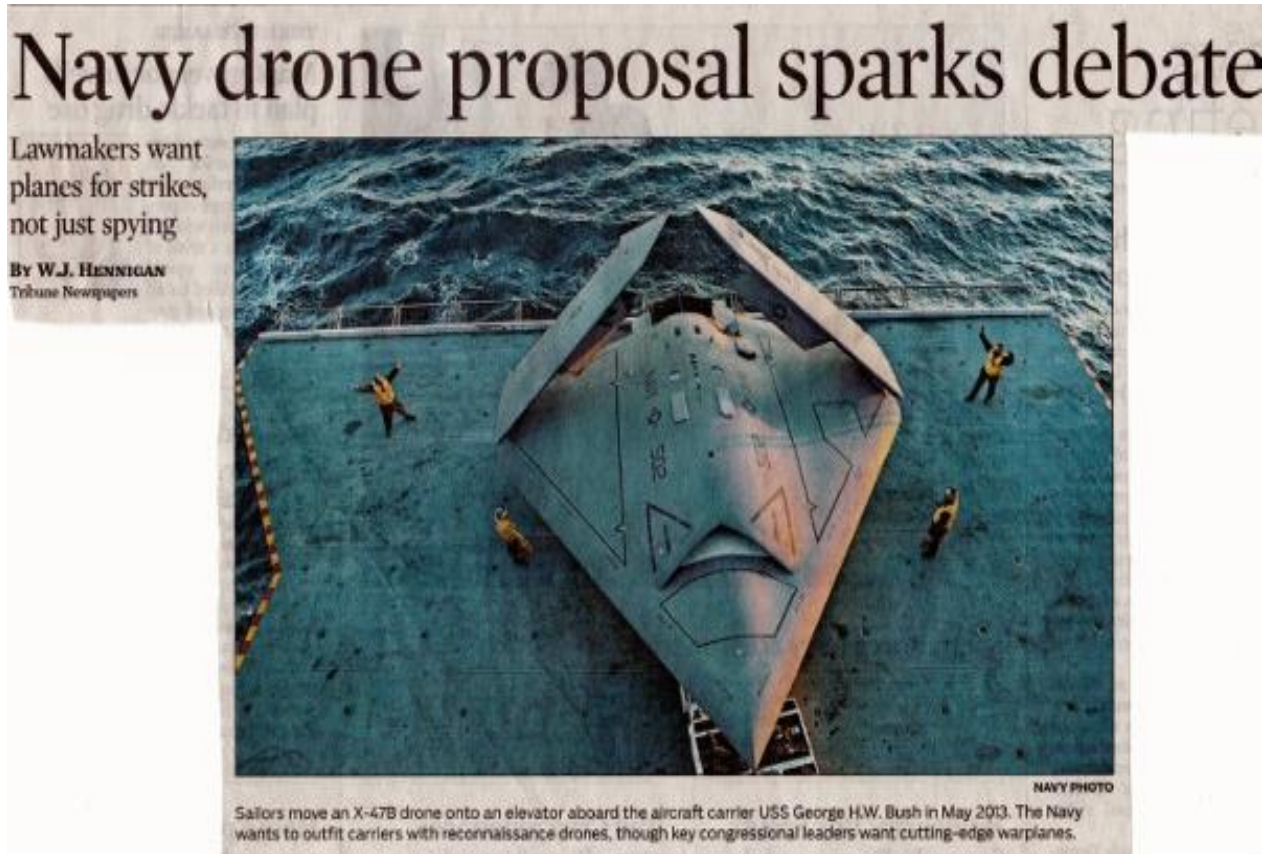
Due to the length of our Paid Memberwhip List, we are no longer printing the complete list in the newsletter. If you wish to view the complete list, go to the Website [ussplymouthrock.com](http://ussplymouthrock.com) and select the Paid Dues Member link. If you are in doubt if your dues are due just look at the date on your blue association membership card.



## Thank You's

We would like to thank the following shipmates/friends for providing pictures, information and articles to the website, the Ships Association and newsletter.

Ronald Hnatovic EMC 1965-66), USS Whetstone (LSD27	Harry T. Anderssen, BTC	USS Alamo (LSD33)
Greg Niepert, RM2	Charles M. Bali, BM3	Andy Dussault, DC2



Article and photo of Navy Drone contributed by Harry T. Andersen, BTC



## USS ARLINGTON COMMISSIONED

The USS *Arlington* (LPD-24) is the newest *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock. It was commissioned at the Norfolk Naval Station on 6 April 2013. The *Arlington* is the eighth LPD to be commissioned out of a total of twelve planned.

The *Arlington* was laid down on 26 May 2008 at the Northrop Grumman Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi, and launched on 23 November 2010. The *San Antonio*-class LPD is an example of the US Navy's modern amphibious fleet. The *Arlington* will be paired with big-deck amphibious ships and be able to carry and deliver up to 800 trained Marines and their equipment to 80% of the beaches in the world. In the type of warfare expected during the 21st Century, this capability is absolutely vital.

The LPD displaces 24,900-tons full load and is 684-ft in length with a beam of 105-ft. It is powered by four sequentially configured Colt-Pielstick turbocharged diesel engines which produce 40,000-hp, and attains a top speed of 22-kts. The *Arlington* has two propellers.



The USS *Arlington* (LPD-24) coming alongside a pier at the Norfolk Navy Base. Note the .50-cal machine guns on both sides of the bow. In addition to the small machine guns, the *Arlington* is defended by two RIM-116 RAM launchers and two 30mm Mk. 44 Bushmaster II close-in weapons.

Article and photo of USS *Arlington* contributed by Harry T. Andersen, BTC



Received an e-mail from Phil Hargis, BMSN, on board 8/68-2/70. "Would like to hear from anyone who served 68-70. Especially those who attended jungle survival school in Panama in 1969, also anyone who was a loader on the twin 3 inch guns. I was a loader on the last gun on port side. Navy Docs took my left mastoid out in 1970, put me out on manpower cut!" His e-mail address is [pthargis@gmail.com](mailto:pthargis@gmail.com)

Received an e-mail from wife of Ed Hart, SM1, Murrieta, CA, on board 54-56 (Plank Owner) "I have your latest letter regarding the USS *Plymouth Rock* and want to inform you that my husband, Ed Hart, won't be renewing his membership. He is currently in an assisted living facility with medical problems and was recently diagnosed with lung cancer. Unfortunately, he is unable to participate in any way with your organization. He was in the Navy, retired as a Commander in 1981, and enjoyed many, many years of attending various reunions for the ships on which he served. It is very sad when an enthusiastic, vibrant person has to spend his final years in this way" Mary Jo Hart. Her e-mail address is: [edandjohart@yahoo.com](mailto:edandjohart@yahoo.com) For those of you who would like to drop a line to Ed his mailing address is: 40040 Corte Calanova, Murrieta, CA 92562

■✉ Received an e-mail from Andy Dussault, DC2. "I'm responding to an inquiry in our website by BGMarshall. I served on the Plymouth Rock from May 1960 to Jan. 1963. In 1961 I was slated to attend my sister's June 2<sup>nd</sup> wedding in Vermont. On a Friday in May 1961 the ship pulled in to Little Creek after a trip "to somewhere" . I had the Repair Division duty section on Friday and I agreed to be a standby for a brown bagger over the weekend because we were expected to be in port for awhile. Saturday morning we were informed that we taking aboard a PT boat and we would be departing on Monday. Consequently, I could not attend my sister's wedding. On our way across the Atlantic the "deck apes" painted the boat white and ( I thought ) green to resemble a yacht. The purpose was for the boat and it's special personnel to protect Jackie Kennedy when she and her sister Princess Radziwill went on a Med cruise – one day, I think- on the royal yacht. Incidentally, being a Damage Control man , I was one of the sailors that was trained to operate ballast control. I just wish I had taken pictures. I never heard that the PT boat was the 109. In fact, I would be surprised. Didn't it "go down" in WW2????

The best part is that not being part of a squadron and being a single ship in the various ports, we had early and GREAT liberty. What a time. During 1961 *Plymouth Rock* made several cruises to the Caribbean and one to the Mediterranean, including work on [Project Mercury](#) and Project [ASROC](#). During 1962 she made several deployments to the Caribbean, and was a member of the blockade force during the [Cuban Missile Crisis](#). On 7 May 1963 she again deployed to the Mediterranean, returning in October." ANDY DUSSAULT DC2

■✉ Received an e-mail from Jeff Weiberdink, GM1 (Ret). "I am the nephew of a sailor who served aboard the Plymouth Rock from Jan. 1972 to Aug. 1972. His name is EN1 (USN retired) Robert Bouchard. I had wanted to add him to the ships roster. After researching his naval history, I found he was stationed on board this ship. This mailing is to let any of his shipmates that may still be here with us that he has passed away. His date of passing was August 09-2014. My family thanks you for your service to our country and for this website. God Bless each and every one of you". Jeff's e-mail address is [fyshfynder@yahoo.com](mailto:fyshfynder@yahoo.com)



## Ships Store Items

The following items are offered for sale through the Ships Store. All orders are handled through Shorty Cyr, BM3, 119 Pinecrest Drive, Waterbury, CT 06708, Phone #203-753-6220, e-mail at: [shortybm3@yahoo.com](mailto:shortybm3@yahoo.com) All orders must be accompanied by a check. Checks must be made out to the USS Plymouth Rock Association. To view all of the items in the Ship Store go to the ships website at [ussplymouthrock.com](http://ussplymouthrock.com) , select Ships Store Link

### Items for Sale:

Sweatshirt (S, M, L, XL) \$30.00

Sweatshirt (XXL) \$35.00

Sweatshirt )XXXL) \$37.00

Plymouth Rock pin \$4.00

Ships Patch \$8.75

Plymouth Rock cap \$15.00

Tee Shirt, short sleeve (blue) (M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL) \$32.00

Plymouth Rock Mug \$15.00

Personalized Commerative Placque \$20.00 or \$25.00 depending on size

Bumper Stickers \$2.80

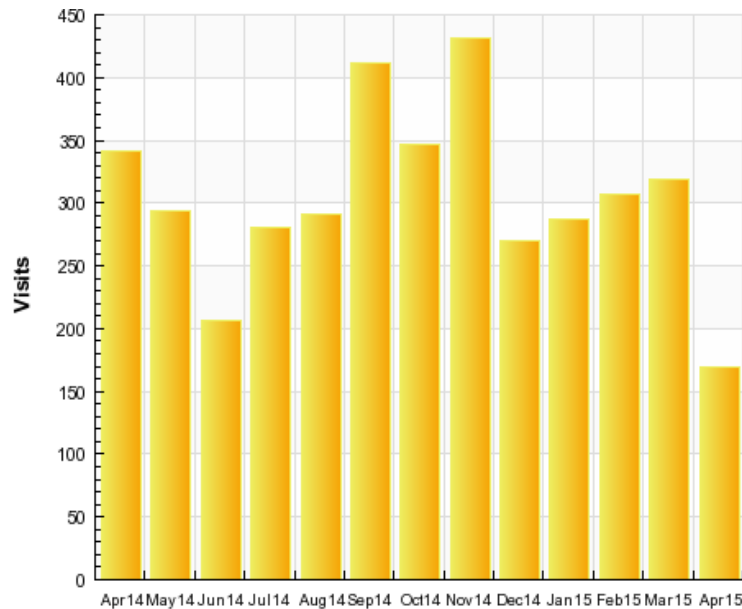
Ships Sleeve Patch \$17.00

Note: All prices include shipping and handling



## Website Success

For the year 2014-15, our website has received over 3,800 visitors. They have viewed the website for different information such as the ability to view pictures of their shipmates, our ship and other ships of the navy. That averages out to over 10 visitors per day. If you would like to see what we have in our website, all you need to do is type USS Plymouth Rock using your browser to view a wealth of data available to you.



Month of the Year	Visits
Apr15	170
Mar15	319
Feb15	307
Jan15	287
Dec14	270
Nov14	432
Oct14	347
Sep14	411
Aug14	291
Jul14	281
Jun14	206
May14	294
Apr14	341





The following picture was provided by Andy Dussault, 1118 Breezy Hill Rd., St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. Photo shows Richard Guber DC2 and Andy Dussault DC3 both being high lined to the USS Vermillion AKA107 to observe damage control drills. Picture probably taken during the summer of 1960 in the Med. It was one week later that the PRock had a collision with the Vermillion while high lining.



## USS Gerald R. Ford

### The Most Expensive Ship Ever

(Submitted by Ronald Hnatovic EMC 1965-66), USS Whetstone (LSD27)

The United States is building its next generation of aircraft carrier, the FORD-class carriers. The USS Gerald R. Ford is currently being built at Newport News Shipbuilding, Virginia.

The keel of *Gerald R. Ford* was laid down on November 13, 2009. Construction began on August 11, 2005, when Northrop Grumman held a ceremonial steel cut for a 15-ton plate that forms part of a side shell unit of the carrier. She was christened on November 9, 2013. The schedule calls for the ship to join the U.S. Navy's fleet in 2016. *Gerald R. Ford* will enter the fleet replacing the inactive USS Enterprise (CVN-65), which ended her 51 years of active service in December 2012.

The numbers behind the USS Gerald R. Ford are impressive; about \$14 billion in total cost, 224 million pounds, about 25 stories high, 1,106 feet long, and 250 feet wide. But the sheer enormity of the ship and construction operation is hard to grasp until you're nearly face-to-metal with the massive military beast.

At Newport News Shipbuilding the power of new technology and 100 years of carrier design is built into every facet of the new ship. The Ford will handle up to 220 take-offs and landings from its deck every day. Part of that quick turnaround is because, when aircraft like the new F-35 return for maintenance, the plane's network will already have alerted ground crews to what's needed so they can get the aircraft on its way faster than ever before.

The new FORD-class aircraft carrier will be the largest, most lethal ship ever when it joins the US fleet in 2016. The scope of the ship's construction is hard to fathom, but that chain is made up of links weighing 360-pounds each. It's the weight of the chains that immobilize the 224 million pound carrier, not the anchors like those on the USS Abraham Lincoln All that weight starts up in the "Bulbous Bow" that displaces the ship's center of gravity, allowing her to cruise on just the energy required for a much smaller ship. This bow alone is more than three stories tall and weighs 116,000 pounds.

With its nuclear power plant and extraordinary size, the Ford is manufactured at Newport News Shipbuilding, Virginia, using "Big Blue" — the largest



crane in the Western Hemisphere — towering 235 feet above the shipyard. Big Blue can lift nearly 2.5 million pounds at a time and is essential for assembling the new class of ship. Ships this big have to be built in dry docks, twenty-two-hundred-feet long and 250 feet wide.

Replacing the 50-year-old Nimitz-class carrier, engineers at Newport News Shipbuilding de-signed the Ford to accept technology that won't be seen for decades. Some of those advancements are expected, but most are as far-fetched as the Navy's newest drones were in 1963. Regardless of what the future brings, all of it will require more power, which is why the Ford will generate three times the energy of Nimitz-class carriers.

Newport News Shipbuilding has learned a lot about building carriers over the years, like the wisdom of leaving the paint job until the ship is finished. This is done to save on repainting over welds and stresses caused during construction. Raw steel exposed to salt air causes the rust, but the various other colors denote the thickness of the plates. The paint applied to the Ford actually isn't paint, but a "high solids coating" that lasts longer and doesn't break down as quickly. Newport News Shipbuilding rents acres of canvas to cover the hull when it applies the coating.

Moving the island house (the control tower) back further on the ship will accommodate an increased launch rate for the 75+ planes that will live aboard the carrier. The Ford will be capable of launching and receiving up to 220 planes a day. That increased rate comes in part from replacing the steam-generated catapult systems like those on the USS Abraham Lincoln, with an electromagnetic system that's more efficient and gentler on the multi-million-dollar jets. Even with the extra fuel and weapons needed to keep that pace, the Ford is equipped to remain at sea without replenishment for months at a time.

Before the FORD-class carriers, Newport News Shipbuilding needed to construct mock-ups of many ship sections to see how it would inte-grate in construction. Now they use 3D design technology. With a pair of these 3D glasses, designers are able to see exactly how everything fits together in a virtual environment. The 3D

system also allows engineers to assemble the ship in modules. These modules can be exchanged and modified over the carrier's lifetime. Inside a module, the electronic workstation could be removed and relocated along with the interior walls and floors. These were all permanent fixtures on previous carriers.

For the first time the Navy will have no urinals on this carrier. Gender neutral toilets mean berthing can be swapped between male and female without concern and one unit means fewer spare parts and repair. The Navy is requesting larger pipes for the Ford to prevent blockage and unpleasant smells, which are common issues on carriers. A carrier's effectiveness isn't judged by its plumbing, but by its ability to deliver lethal military force from these 4.5 acres of sovereign U.S. territory. That lethality comes in many forms — like the weapons aboard the new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

The Sea Sparrow Missile also factors into lethality with its ability to fly four times the speed of sound, turn on a dime, and intercept anti-ship missiles more than 30 miles out. Ford's lethality is also enhanced by the RIM 116 short-range defensive surface to air missile.....and the radar-guided, rotating 20mm Gatling Gun called the Phalanx CIWS (Sea-Wiz). That lethality aims to help keep sailors safe and the enemy less so.

Criticism of the new carrier, which may be the last of the "Big" carriers now that drones are replacing manned aircraft, has been swift and harsh. Facing a longer timeline for completion and burgeoning costs, Newport News Shipbuilding construction director Geoff Hummel says, "Problems are something we think about every day. There are going to be issues in a new class of ship," Hummel says. "The question is how big are they and how serious?" Minimizing those problems are the Newport News Shipbuilding employees, out there every day of the year. Newport News wants the Ford's eventual new sailors to know that "this is an awesome ship that they'll bring to life." Those sailors shouldn't doubt it, with the decades of experience Newport News employees bring.

When the Ford finally hits the water, it will look less like something from "Waterworld" and more like something from the future. That's where generations of new technology will be.



## OLD SAILORS

OLD SAILORS SIT AND CHEW THE FAT  
ABOUT THINGS THAT USED TO BE,  
OF THE THINGS THEY'VE SEEN,  
THE PLACES THEY'VE BEEN,  
WHEN THEY VENTURED OUT TO SEA. THEY  
REMEMBERED FRIENDS FROM LONG AGO,  
THE TIMES THEY HAD BACK THEN.  
THE MONEY THEY SPENT,  
THE BEER THEY DRANK,  
IN THEIR DAYS AS SAILING MEN THEIR LIVES  
ARE LIVED IN DAYS GONE BY,  
WITH THOUGHTS THAT FOREVER LAST.  
OF BELL BOTTOM BLUES,  
WINGED WHITE HATS,  
AND GOOD TIMES IN THEIR PAST.  
THEY RECALL LONG NIGHTS WITH A MOON  
SO BRIGHT  
FAR OUT ON A LONELY SEA.  
THE THOUGHTS THEY HAD  
AS YOUTHFUL LADS,  
WHEN THEIR LIVES WERE WILD AND FREE.  
THEY KNEW SO WELL HOW THEIR HEARTS  
WOULD SWELL  
WHEN OLD GLORY FLUTTERED PROUD AND  
FREE.  
THE UNDERWAY PENNANT  
SUCH A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT  
AS THEY PLOWED THROUGH AN ANGRY SEA  
THEY TALKED OF THE CHOW OL' COOKIE  
WOULD MAKE  
AND THE SHRILL OF THE BOSUN'S PIPE.

HOW SALT SPRAY WOULD FALL  
LIKE SPARKS FROM HELL  
WHEN A STORM STRUCK IN THE NIGHT.  
THEY REMEMBER OLD SHIPMATES  
ALREADY GONE  
WHO FOREVER HOLD A SPOT IN THEIR  
HEART,  
WHEN SAILORS WERE BOLD,  
AND FRIENDSHIPS WOULD HOLD,  
UNTIL DEATH RIPPED THEM APART THEIR  
SAILING DAYS ARE GONE AWAY,  
NEVER AGAIN WILL THEY CROSS THE  
BROW.  
THEY HAVE NO REGRETS,  
THEY KNOW THEY ARE BLESSED,  
FOR HONORING A SACRED VOW. THEIR  
NUMBERS GROW LESS WITH EACH  
PASSING DAY  
AS THE FINAL MUSTER BEGINS,  
THERE'S NOTHING TO LOSE,  
ALL HAVE PAID DUES,  
AND THEY'LL SAIL WITH SHIPMATES AGAIN.  
I'VE HEARD THEM SAY BEFORE GETTING  
UNDERWAY  
THAT THERE'S STILL SOME SAILING TO DO,  
THEY'LL SAY WITH A GRIN  
THAT THEIR SHIP HAS COME IN  
AND THE LORD IS COMMANDING THE  
CREW.



**Highlining in the Caribbean in 1967. Picture contributed by Donald Rhine FTG2.**



## **NAVY CHIEF**

**A chief petty officer is an American patriot who made the decision to spend the greater part of his life in service to his country.**

**He started his navy career the same as all of us . . . as a seaman recruit who was just as lost and confused as we were our first day in boot camp.**

**The rating of chief did not come easy, only after many years of dedication, work, training . . . and giving of himself. This indicated that he was a teacher and a leader, who could always be depended upon to have the answer to the most complicated question. The chief was the person who set the example for the rest of us to follow . . . His conduct, skill, knowledge and general bearing was always displayed as the goals we all should try to achieve. The chief was the guy you could go to with a personal problem and who always had the time to listen . . . even if he didn't always say what you wanted to hear. Still, you knew it was good advice. The chief was the guy who would stand behind us if we fouled up, making it his mission to see that we were trained not to make the same mistake again . . . And God help us when we did!**

**The chief was the first one to shake your hand the day you sewed your first crow onto your left sleeve. The chief was the guy who could step on your toes without messing up your shine. The chief was the guy who made me proud to be a sailor and honored to be a part of our great navy. Yes, there were times when I didn't care too much for my chief, but now I know that it was due to my immaturity and lack of**

good sense . . . Little did I know at the time that the chief was actually my best friend and everything he did was for my own good. The chief is the backbone of the navy . . . and without the chief we would surely founder and sink.

As I grow older I think back to my few short years as a navy man and find that many of my actions and the way I have conducted myself are a direct result of the lessons my chiefs taught me. Those lessons include... fairness, understanding, firmness, honesty, pride, honor and most importantly, love for my country.

I wish that I would have told all my chiefs these things when I had the chance to do it in person. So if any of my chiefs should read my thoughts here and would happen to remember this hard headed QM3 . . . I send you all the honors befitting a brave and loyal leader. And you have my sincere thanks for taking this scared young country boy and doing your best to turn him into a sailor and more importantly a man.

Our country owes you more than it will ever know.



**From the desk of Tom Wagner, Association President**



**PREZ SEZ:**

At the present time, there has been no decision on the 2016 reunion location. Bill Haynie, VP/Reunion Coordinator informed me that he had to undergo a surgical procedure and would be under the weather for about 6 weeks. He did say that he had received literature from about four different cities but had not had a chance to pursue the locations. So for now, we are in holding pattern till Bill recuperates. You may want to drop him a line.

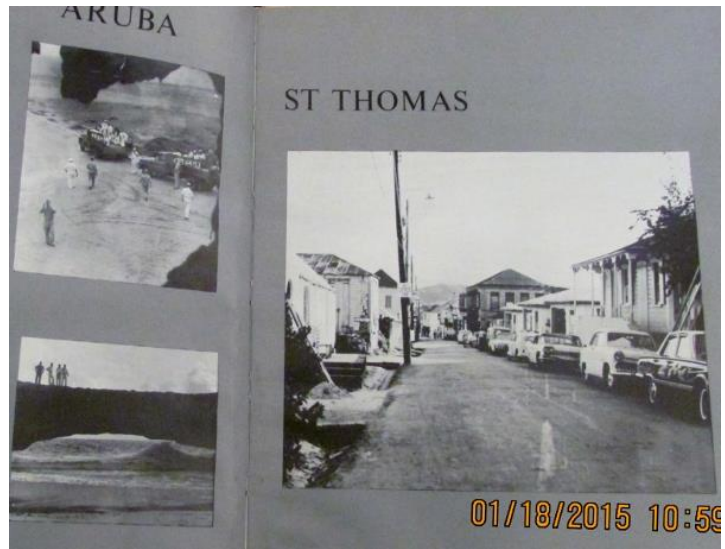
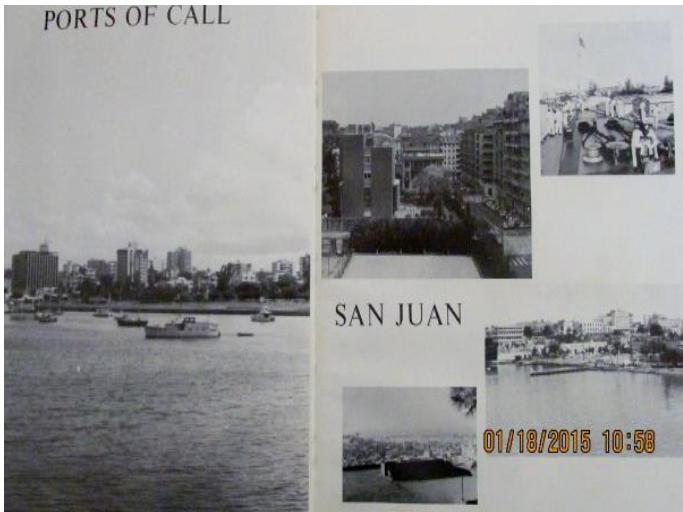
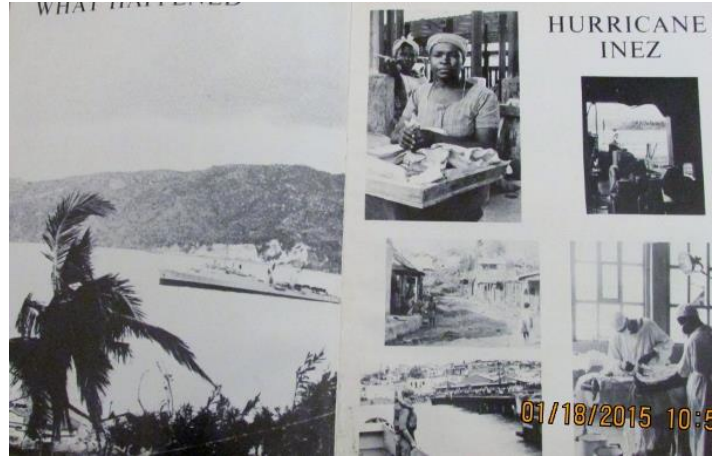
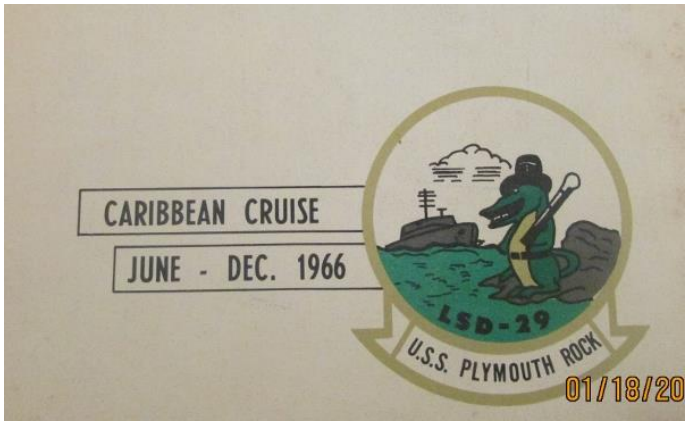
Secretary/Webmaster, Bill Provencal, has received information from spouses and other family member about the passing of shipmates. I would refer you to the website for information on the passing of these individuals.

I must say that I am glad to see winter has left the mid west. I am not a cold weather fan, so I extend my sympathy to all you Northeast people. I don't know how Boston survived. I would have abandoned my house.

There is nothing more concerning your Association that I can report. As soon as there is information available on the 2016 reunion, it will be made available to you.

Regards, Tom Wagner





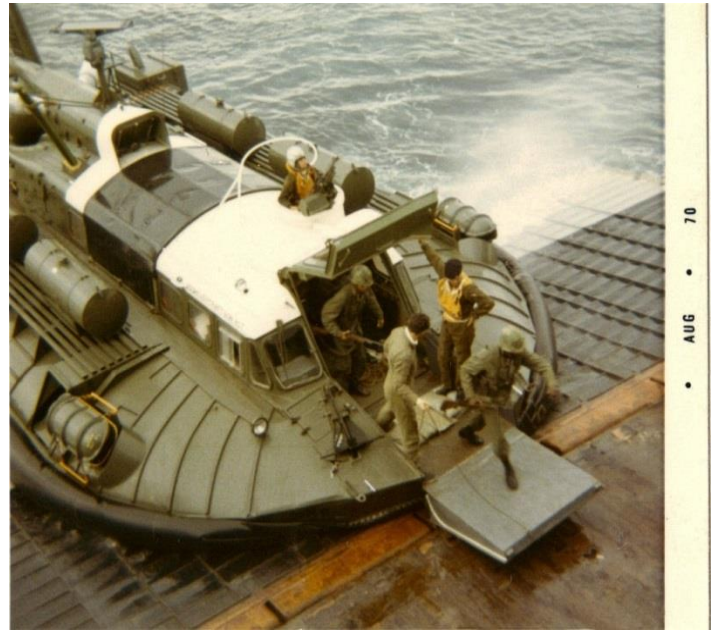
A few images from a Caribbean Cruise book in 1966, contributed by Greg Niepert, RM2, on board 1/66-5/68



Photo # NH 97361 USS Plymouth Rock approaches USS Iwo Jima



Plymouth Rock approaches the USS Iwo Jima

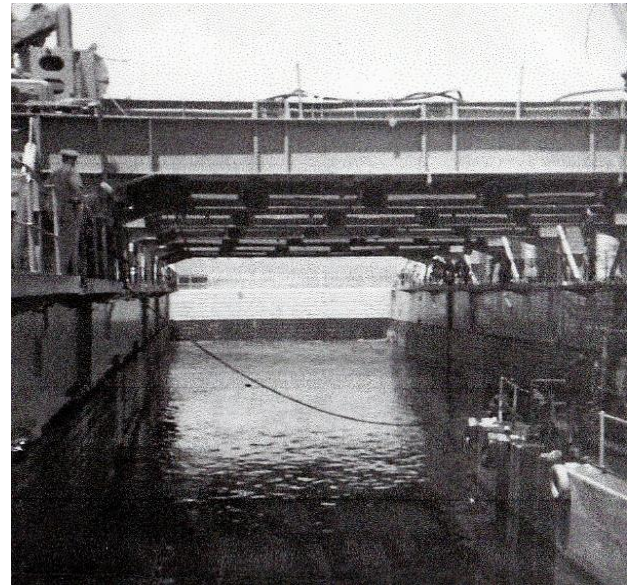


British LCAC landing in the ships welldeck



Picture of the Delaware Memorial Bridge taken from the ship heading up the Delaware River to Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in 1959. Picture by John McAvoy, BMSN





The above pictures were contributed by Charles Bali, BM3, on board 12/66-8/68. Pictures were taken in April and May 1967



## Navy Trivia

### Three Sheets to the Wind

We use the term "three sheets to the wind" to describe someone who has too much to drink. As such, they are often bedraggled with perhaps shirttails out, clothes a mess. The reference is to

a sailing ship in disarray, that is with sheets (lines -- not "ropes" -- that adjust the angle at which a sail is set in relation to the wind ) flapping loosely in the breeze.

## Watches

Traditionally, a 24-hour day is divided into seven watches. These are: midnight to 4 a.m. [0000-0400], the mid-watch; 4 to 8 a.m. [0400-0800], morning watch; 8 a.m. to noon [0800-1200], forenoon watch; noon to 4 p.m. [1200-1600], afternoon watch; 4 to 6 p.m. [1600-1800] first dog watch; 6 to 8 p.m. [1800-2000], second dog watch; and, 8 p.m. to midnight [2000-2400], evening watch. The half hours of the watch are marked by the striking the bell an appropriate number of times.

## Starboard

The Vikings called the side of their ship its board, and they placed the steering oar, the "star" on the right side of the ship, thus that side became known as the "star board." It's been that way ever since. And, because the oar was in the right side, the ship was tied to the dock at the left side. This was known as the loading side or "larboard". Later, it was decided that "larboard" and "starboard" were too similar, especially when trying to be heard over the roar of a heavy sea, so the phrase became the "side at which you tied up to in port" or the "port" side.

## Scuttlebutt

The origin of the word "scuttlebutt," which is nautical parlance for a rumor, comes from a combination of "scuttle" to make a hole in the ship's hull and thereby causing her to sink and "butt" a cask or hogshead used in the days of wooden ships to hold drinking water. The cask from which the ship's crew took their drinking water like a water fountain was the "scuttlebutt". Even in today's Navy a drinking fountain is referred to as such. But, since the crew used to congregate around the "scuttlebutt", that is where the rumors about the ship or voyage would begin. Thus, then and now, rumors are talk from the "scuttlebutt" or just "scuttlebutt"

## Holystone

The last Navy ships with teak decks were the battleships, now since decommissioned. Teak, and other wooden decks, were scrubbed with a piece of sandstone, nicknamed at one time by an anonymous witty sailor as the "holystone." It was so named because since its use always brought a man to his knees, it must be holy! However, holystones were banned by the Navy by General Order Number 215 of 5 March 1931 because they wore down the expensive teak decks too fast.

## Fathom

Fathom was originally a land measuring term derived from the Anglo-Saxon word "faetm" meaning to embrace. In those days, most measurements were based on average size of parts of the body, such as the hand (horses are still measured this way) or the foot (that's why 12 inches are so named). A fathom is the average distance from fingertip to fingertip of the outstretched arms of a man -- about six feet. Since a man stretches out his arms to embrace his sweetheart, Britain's Parliament declared that distance be called a "fathom" and it be a unit of measure. A fathom remains six feet. The word was also used to describe taking the measure or "to fathom" something. Today, of course, when one is trying to figure something out, they are trying to "fathom" it.

