

USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter September - December, 2015, 42nd 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

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/

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Treasurer

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★ ★ ★ Welcome Aboard ★ ★ ★

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Reunion Coordinators:
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mailto:whhaynie@charter.net



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



Information on the Reunion in 2016

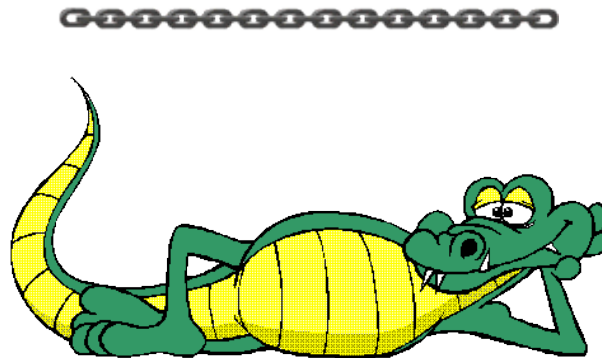


The 2016 Ships Reunion will be held in Pensacola, FL. We have confirmed dates of Sept 28 through Oct 2, 2016 reserved. We will be staying at the Holiday Inn, located at 7813 N. Davis Hwy, Pensacola, Fla. This location is adjacent to Exit 13 off I-10, We have room rates at \$109.00/night plus taxes which includes breakfast. The Holiday Inn reservation Number is 850-472-1400. The web site is www.holidayinnpns.com.

The plans are for our group to visit the Naval Aviation Museum on Pensacola NAS. Admission is free, and their collection is extensive so it might take several days to see

everything depending upon your level of interest. Some of their activities include motion based simulator rides, 360 degree pitch and roll max flight 3D simulator ride, IMAX movies, 4D Blue Angel Theatre, and visits to Hangar Bay One and the gift shop. There is also a flight line tour of old aircraft the museum has collected. The Cubi Bar Café is located there for meals, but it is also a popular museum exhibit.

Bill Haynie, reunion coordinator contacted the public affairs office of the Blue Angels and inquired about a guest speaker but was put off till spring. Reunion Coordinators are Bill and Lynn Haynie, 864-934-2900, <mailto:whhaynie@charter.net>

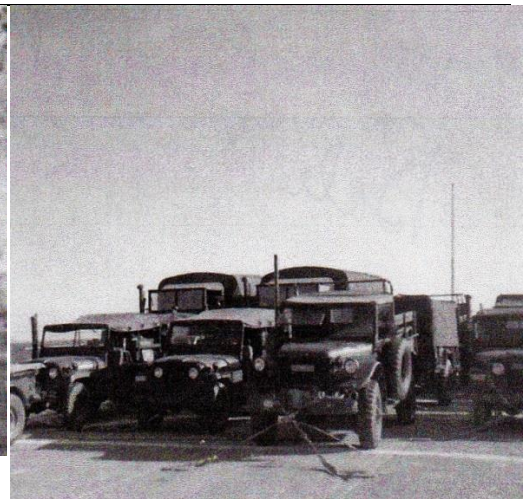
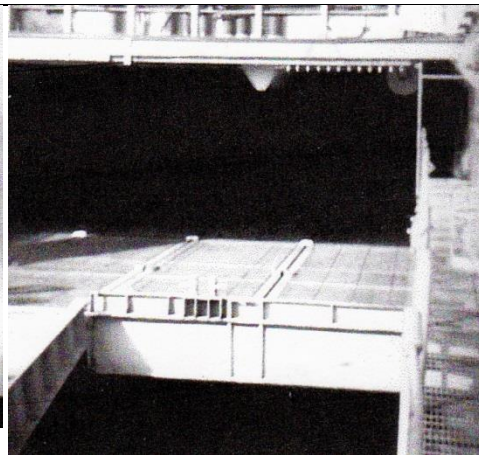


Recent Address/E-Mail/Phone Numbers Changes to the Ships Muster List

**CDR. Jerry Guertin, On board 75-77. New Mailing Address: 6366 Appomattox Dr.,
Pennsacola, FL 32503**

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

**LTjg Bruce Blomgren, On board 1964-69. New Mailing Address: 127 Andover Place,
Kendall Park, NJ 08824**



Pictures contributed by Chuck Bali, BM3. Taken April 1967



Known Deceased Shipmates

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

Robert Bouchard, EN1, on board 1/72-8/72, Deceased August 9, 2015	Rick Roncone, CS3, on board 12/67 – 6/70, Deceased February 25, 2015



Paid Membership List

Due to the length of our Paid Membership 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 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.

Harry Andersen, BTC	USS Whetstone	Chuck Bali, BM3
LTJg Bruce Blomgren	Woodie Brewer, ETSN	



	<h2 style="text-align: center;"><u>WRITE AN ARTICLE!</u></h2> <p>We need your articles and letters to the newsletter editor for publication in our newsletter.</p> <p>Photographs accompanying articles are much appreciated.</p> <p>Send your articles to the editor at: billinp@metrocast.net</p>
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■✉ Received this e-mail from Ron Swearingen, DC3. "Thanks Bill for all of your work!!! You are very much appreciated, I always enjoy hearing any news/history about the P Rock. Ron Swearingen"

■✉ Received an e-mail from Steve Kennedy, E-4. "Served as deck ape. Worked briefly with Corpsman and then went to Corpsman school. Thereafter served at Philadelphia Naval Hospital as the Senior Corpsman on an amputee ward. Discharged July 1976." His e-mail address is skennedy@ettlinc.com

■✉ Received a nice e-mail from Woodie Brewer, ETSN, attached to the P Rock with BMU2, South Cruise, 1965-66: "Thank you very much for taking the time to respond. My DD-214 does not reflect the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AEM) but at least one of my fellow Beachmasters does. He didn't realize he had it because they were never presented and many years later, he happened to be looking at is DD-214 and saw it. He then submitted a Form 180 for the medal and received both the AEM along with a Combat Action Ribbon. It was by accident that I learned of my Shipmates awards and it got me thinking. We were on the same BMU2 Team and made two cruises together. It was rare that we were not together.

Our team was embarked on the Plymouth Rock for that cruise which included Panama as well as other Ports. If you recall, we were on our way to Port O' Prince for liberty when the conflict broke out. We were then diverted to the other side of the island. The tour of duty lasted from the Fall of 1965 to the Spring of 1967. I turned 21 on that cruise.

I have a very Military-Friendly Congressman, Vern Buchanan. I am going to submit a request for correction via his office and see what happens.

Thank you, again, for taki ng the time to look up this information for me."



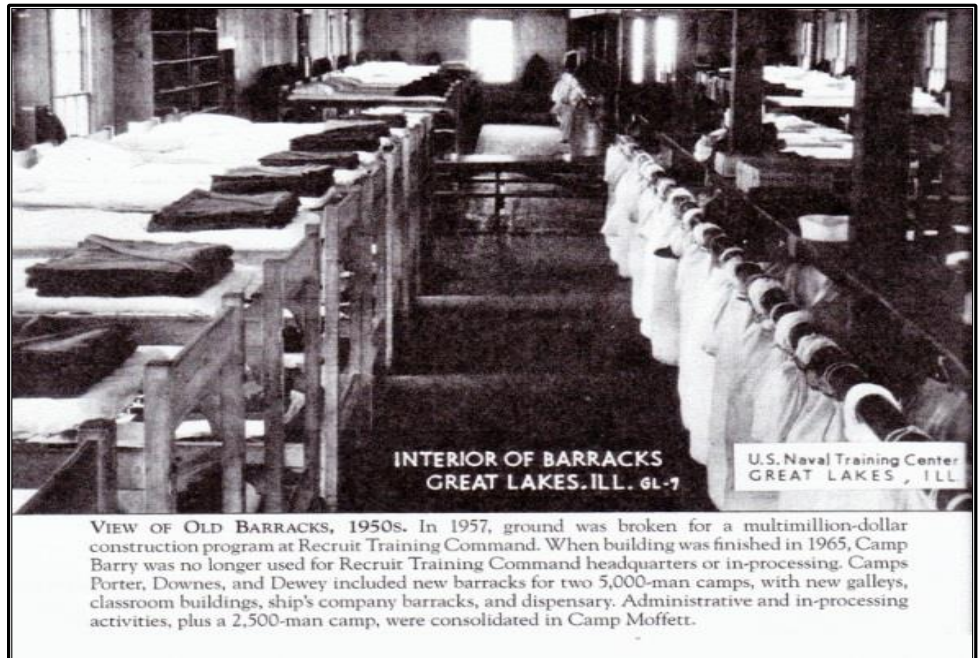
REMINDER OLD SHIPMATES

How long has it been? Thirty, forty or fifty years since you've seen each other.

Maybe all it will take to get your fellow shipmate to attend the 2016 reunion is a call from you? You can get your old shipmates telephone number or e-mail address from the ships Membership List in the Website

There is no time like the present. Make the call.





Photos contributed by Harry Andersen, BTC



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 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, 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





NY Harbor 1/ Flight Deck Loaded 2 Pictures contributed by LTjg Bruce Blomgren



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A Veteran is someone who, at one point in his or her life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America" with no restrictions.
Thank you to all that have and are serving

Image and "Food for Thought" from USS Whetstone Ships Assoc.



USS Plymouth Rock (LSD-29) pulls alongside USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2) for refueling, during operations in the Atlantic, February 1979. Photographed by PH2 Alexander and PH3 Kent from on board the Iwo Jima. CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261 (HMM-261) are parked in the foreground. Official U.S. Navy Photograph, from the collections of the Naval Historical Center



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



PREZ SEZ

Shipmates:

I hope you all had as nice a Thanksgiving as I did. All my out-of-town grand kids were able to make it home for the holiday, so we had a festive dinner at our house. My wife did all the cooking, she insists on doing that, and as usual, it was delicious and I over did it.

Bill Haynie is working hard to complete arrangements for the 2016 Reunion in Pensacola, FL. The lodging site has been determined, but look in this News Letter for additional information.

I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Let's not forget those who can't be home because they are preserving our precious freedom.

Tom Wagner



The Gator Navy

The
Amphibs



At 7:55 a.m. (Pearl Harbor time) on the morning of Sunday, December 7, 1941, the U.S. Navy was without a single oceangoing ship capable of discharging a cargo of big tanks or other heavy equipment onto a beach without the aid of piers or cranes. The events of that moment would change that situation. Amphibious forces in the Pacific would wrest island by island away from the Japanese and in Europe recover Europe from Hitler's grip. Since then amphibious forces have played an important role in U.S. Navy operations. The Gator Navy's mission is to serve as primary landing ships for assault operations of Marine expeditionary units. The U.S. Navy has the largest fleet of amphibious assault ships and has used them in a variety of missions since the 1970s.



A port view view of the amphibious transport dock USS Plymouth Rock (LSD-29), underway 10 September 1974. Note the helicopter preparing to land.
Source National Archives



USS Carter Hall, LSD 50 was designed specifically to operate LCAC vessels. It has the largest capacity for these landing craft (four) of any U.S. Navy amphibious platform. It also provides docking and repair services for LCACs and for conventional landing craft.

LHA and LHD'S Amphibious Ships

The largest of all amphibious warfare ships; resembles a small aircraft carrier; capable of Vertical/Short Take-Off and Landing (V/STOL), Short Take-Off Vertical Landing (STOVL), Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) tilt-rotor and Rotary Wing (RW) aircraft operations; contains a well deck to support use of Landing Craft, Air Cushioned (LCAC) and other watercraft (with exception of the first two LHA(R) class ships, LHA 6 and LHA 7, which have no well deck). LHA 8 will feature a well deck.

The Tarawa-class LHAs and Wasp-class LHDs provide the Marine Corps with a means of ship-to-shore movement by helicopter in addition to movement by landing craft. One Tarawa-class – which has extensive storage capacity and can accommodate Landing Craft Utility (LCU) and LCAC craft – participated in Operations Desert Shield / Storm. Since that time, LHAs (and later LHDs) have been participants in major humanitarian-assistance, occupation and combat operations in which the United States has been involved. Such operations have

included participating as launch platforms for Marine Corps expeditionary forces into Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001 and 2002, Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and humanitarian support after the catastrophic Tsunami in 2004. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, two LHDs served as "Harrier carriers," launching an air group of AV-8B attack aircraft against targets inside Iraq. In 2004, LHAs and LHDs were used to transport thousands of Marines and their equipment to Iraq and Afghanistan for combat operations. Post Hurricane Katrina support was provided in New Orleans by LHD 7 (Iwo Jima) where thousands of police, fire and rescue personnel were hosted onboard during recovery operations and IWO JIMA operated as the central command and control hub. With delivery of Iwo Jima in 2001, the Navy and Marine Corps reached a desired force level of amphibious warfare ships – LHAs/LHDs, LPDs and LSD 41/49s – that provide fully capable Expeditionary Strike Groups to fulfill anticipated forward-presence and expeditionary requirements. The eighth LHD, Makin Island (LHD 8), was delivered to the Navy in April 2009, and commissioned in October 2009. LHD 8 is the first U.S. Navy amphibious assault ship to employ gas turbines vice steam boilers, and the first Navy surface ship to be equipped with both gas turbines and an Auxiliary Propulsion System (APS). The APS uses two induction-type Auxiliary Propulsion Motors (APM) powered from the ship's electrical grid instead of using main propulsion engines to power the ship's shaft. Instead of using its gas turbines which are less efficient at lower speeds, the ship will be able to use its APS for roughly 75 percent of the time the ship is underway.



The U.S. Navy amphibious assault ship *USS America* (LHA-6) approaches Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, for a scheduled port visit. *America* was traveling through the U.S. Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet areas of responsibility on its maiden transit, "America visits the Americas." The ship was scheduled to be ceremoniously commissioned on 11 October 2014 in San Francisco, California (USA).



GULF OF ADEN
(Oct. 26, 2015)
Naval Air
Crewman 3rd
Class Justen
Thurman
communicates
with pilots from
the "Blackjacks"
of Helicopter Sea
Combat
Squadron (HSC)
21 as the Wasp-
class amphibious
assault ship *USS*
Essex (LHD 2)
conducts
maneuvers
during normal
operations in the
Gulf of Aden.
Essex is the
flagship of the

Essex Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and, with the embarked 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (15th MEU), is deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Christopher A



PACIFIC OCEAN
(June 20, 2007) -
The dock landing
ship *USS Pearl*
Harbor (LSD 52)
operates in the
Pacific Ocean in
support of UNITAS
Pacific 2007 which
supports
Partnership of the
Americas (POA)
2007. POA focus is
to enhance
relationships with
partner nations

through a variety of exercises and events at sea and on shore throughout South America, Latin America, and the Caribbean.



A U.S. Naval Air Reserve Sikorsky SH-3A *Sea King* helicopter (BuNo 148979) of Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron 74 (HS-74) parked on the helicopter pad of the amphibious transport dock ship USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29). 10 September 1974



Navy Trivia

Binnacle List Many novice sailors, confusing the words binnacle and barnacle, have wondered what their illnesses had to do with crusty growths found on the hull of a ship. Their confusion

is understandable. Binnacle is defined as the stand or housing for the ship's compass located on the bridge. The term binnacle list, in lieu of sick list, originated years ago when ship corpsmen used to place a list of sick on the binnacle health. After long practice, it came to be called binnacle list.

Boatswains Pipe No self-respecting boatswain's mate would dare admit he couldn't blow his pipe in a manner above reproach. This pipe, which is the emblem of the boatswain and his mates, has an ancient and interesting history. On the ancient row-galleys, the boatswain used his pipe to call the stroke;. Later because its shrill tune could be heard above most of the activity on board, it was used to signal various happenings such as knock-off and the boarding of officials. So essential was this signaling device to the well-being of the ship, that it became a badge of office and honor in the British and American Navy of the sailing ships.

Carry On In the days of sail, the Officer of the Deck kept a weather eye constantly on the slightest change in wind so sails could be reefed or added as necessary to ensure the fastest headway. Whenever a good breeze came along, the order to carry on would be given. It meant to hoist every bit of canvas the yards could carry. Pity the poor sailor whose weather eye failed him and the ship was caught partially reefed when a good breeze arrived. Through the centuries the terms connotation has changed somewhat. Today, the Bluejackets Manual defines carry on as an order to resume work; work not so grueling as two centuries ago.

Chief Petty Officer in Baseball Hall of Fame - Bob Feller is the only CPO to be elected to the baseball hall of fame. He played for the Cleveland Indians. He was a pitcher.

Clothes Stops A small diameter cord, approximately 12 inches, used to tie laundry to a clothes line. The early Navy clothes pin. Issued in recruit training until 1973.

Ditty Bags Ditty bog (or box) was originally called ditto bag because it contained at least two of everything - two needles, two spools of thread, two buttons, etc. With the passing of years, the ditto was dropped in favor of ditty and remains so today. Before WW I, the Navy issued ditty boxes made of wood and styled after foot lockers. These carried the personal gear and some clothes of the sailor. Today the ditty bag is still issued to recruits and contains a sewing kit, toiletry articles and personal items such as writing paper and pens.

Flat hats First authorized in 1852 the flat hat was eliminated on 1 April 1963 due to non-available materials. The original hats had unit names on the front, however, unit names were taken off in January 1941.

Forecastle The appropriate pronunciation for this word is fo'ksul. The forecastle is the forward part of the main deck. It derives its name from the days of Viking galleys when wooden castles were built on the forward and after parts the main deck from which archers and other fighting men could shoot arrows and throw spears, rocks, etc

Gundecking In the modern Navy, falsifying reports, records and the like is often referred to as gundecking. The origin of the term is somewhat obscure, but at the risk of gundecking, here are two plausible explanations for its modern usage. The deck below the upper deck on

British sailing ships-of-war was called the gundeck although it carried no guns. This false deck may have been constructed to deceive enemies as to the amount of armament carried, thus the gundeck was a falsification. A more plausible explanation may stem from shortcuts taken by early Midshipmen when doing their navigation lessons. Each Mid was supposed to take sun lines at noon and star sights at night and then go below to the gundeck, work out their calculations and show them to the navigator. Certain of these young men, however, had a special formula for getting the correct answers. They would note the noon or last position on the quarter-deck traverse board and determine the approximate current position by dead reckoning plotting. Armed with this information, they proceeded to the gundeck to gundeck their navigation homework by simply working backwards from the dead reckoning position



The picture was taken in Panama. I am on the left and the man in the middle, JOE Kenney, PNSN. Who is now retired NYPD Chief of Police – Patrol. The other man was a DUKW driver. Photo provided by Woodie Brewer, ETSN.