

USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter September-December 2003

Welcome to the USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter

This is our Fifth Ships Newsletter to be created in this format. 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 at:
billinp@worldpath.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 billinp@worldpath.net Our website is found at www.ussplymouthrock.com

**Image contributed by Ron Swearingen,
DC3**





Excerpt from German Newspaper (Wilhelmshavener Zeitung) dated September 3, 1967. Photo and newspaper provided by Ron Swearingen, DC3 of Alto Loma, CA

The Largest Ship After the War (11,000 tons)

After a two hour delay caused by thick fog, the US-Landing Dock Ship "Plymouth Rock" pushed itself, yesterday noon, through the canal entrance into the Jade Harbor. The 11,000 ton ship, "Plymouth Rock" is the largest ship that visits Wilhelmshaven after the war.

The journey on the US-ship to Europe was given as an award to the crew of 300. The "Plymouth Rock" became, because of a tough Navy contest, the best landing vessel of the US-Marine. The trip which started in Copenhagen will take it via to Wilhelmshaven to Southampton. The German and British Harbors were especially requested by the crew and authorized. The 300 sailors proudly look upon the large "E", painted on the side of the ship, that depicts their vessel as the best US-Landing Ship, which towers 35 meters above the water.

High Point Wilhelmshaven

The Captain of the "Plymouth Rock". R. G. Bagby, expressed his pleasure to get to know Wilhelmshaven. The crew was especially looking forward to visit the Jade Harbor. The stay in Wilhelmshaven is considered the high point of this trip to Europe.

The hope harbor of the "Plymouth Rock" is in Little Creek Virginia. Its operating areas are the domestic waters and the Atlantic ocean. This landing dock ship has the capability to dock smaller landing boats to perform repairs on them.

The "Plymouth Rock" is docked at the North-Gazellen Bridge (Bonteheim, Weserstrasse), and it can be viewed by the public on Saturday and Sunday from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

Translated into English by Ursula Simpson

Information from Harry Andersen, BTC, Ships Historian

1. Some of you asked at the last reunion about getting copies of the video about the USS Ashland LSD1. You can obtain a free catalog by calling 1-800-277-1977, 47 pages of WW2 videos, or on the web at www.military.com
2. Harry is asking anyone who is willing to send him pictures from the Waukegan Reunion if they could send them to him. He is going to start a 2003 Reunion Book. His address is: Harry Andersen, 2544 Chestnut Street, Waukegan, IL 60087 or you can e-mail them to him at andycporetsnipe@aol.com

Information from Paul Mohawk, Treasurer

Paul reports that new membership cards for 2003-2004 will be coming out very soon. He has new cards and will type out and laminate them and mail within a few weeks, hopefully.

Reunion Information

The fourth reunion of the Plymouth Rock Association was held in Waukegan, IL on June 5-7, 2003. (See the website for pictures and information about the reunion) At the Business Meeting, Rich Mathis and Norm Jepson volunteered to run the next reunion which will be held in Branson, MO on September 9-11, 2004. The reason for having the reunion in 2004 rather than 2005 was to bring the reunion timetable back on track, with our having a reunion every two years. It also makes the dues process simpler, since dues go from reunion to reunion.

Rich and Norm have informed me that we now have 50 rooms reserved at the Lodge of the Ozarks (middle of the strip) and that rooms will be \$80.00 + 7% tax

Lodge of the Ozarks

Free Continental Breakfast; 3 Restaurants, Indoor Pool/Hot Tub, 3 Gift & Apparel Shops, Massage Therapist, In Room/Coffee Maker, Hair Dryer, Iron and Ironing Board. We have available to us a free 24 hour hospitality room.

WEDNESDAY September 8, 2004

Check In/ Registration/ Show on Your own

THURSDAY, September 9, 2004

TBD Veterans Memorial	\$7.50 + \$8.00 Travel
8 PM Moe Bandy Show	\$16.00 + \$8.00 Travel

FRIDAY, September 10, 2004

12:00 pm Show Boat Branson Belle	\$39.00 + \$8.00 Travel
2 Hour Luncheon Show	
8:00 pm Mickey Gilley Show	\$23.00

SATURDAY, September 11, 2004

2:00 pm Business Meeting	
6:00 pm Banquet	
Prime Rib of Beef	\$25.58
Stuffed Breast of Chicken	\$19.18
Picture After Banquet	No Charge
(Digital Camera / Will e-mail)	

SUNDAY, September 12 Good Byes

If you need to contact either Rich or Norm, their e-mails addresses are:

Rich Mathis: rmathis98@yahoo.com

Norm Jepson: rnjepson@aol.com

Association UpDate

At the Business Meeting of the Plymouth Rock Association, new duties for officers of the Association were presented and accepted. The following officers were nominated and elected:

President: Tom Wagner
Vice President: Roger Lamay
Treasurer: Paul Mohawk
Secretary: Bill Provencal

The following individuals were appointed as officers until the next reunion.

Ships Historian: Harry Andersen
Reunion Chars: Richard Mathis and Norm Jepson
Webmaster: Bill Provencal
Storekeeper: Brad Baldwin

Shipmates who live in the State of Maine

Bailey	Gary F	Madawaska
Caldwell	Timothy	Old Town
Fryman	Ervin H.	Union
Gilpatrick	Thomas	Bar Harbor
Howland	John	Waldoboro
Parker	Errol	Oxford
Simons	Charlie	Eliot

Undated Article found at the Reunion

Ship fights fire in Peru

Story and photo
by JOE George Marshall

While moored at Porto Callao Terminal, Callao, Peru, USS Plymouth Rock (LSD 29) called its Rescue and Assistance Detail into action Thursday, November 5 to fight a large fire.

The fire started among materials staged on the pier for loading onto merchant ships. Flames quickly spread onto a large conveyor loader, and the heat could be felt on Plymouth Rock's quarterdeck 200 feet away. Paper, rubber, oil, and graphite fed the flames. Adding an extra hazard to the fire was the presence of methyl ethyl ketone peroxide, a chemical which irritates the respiratory system. If this chemical makes contact with dirt, ash, or rust, an explosion can result.

Under the direction of Plymouth Rock's Damage Control Assistant (DCA), Chief Warrant Officer John Meyer, and with the aid of Chief Warrant Officers Michael Sprangers and Merrill Shope, hose teams began fighting the fire only four minutes after the fire started.

With personnel from USS Stump (A11 978), USS Capodanno (FF 1081), and USS Dahlgren (DDG 43) standing by to render assistance, Plymouth Rock's fire-fighting team had the fire out 15 minutes after the fire began. Nozzlemen on the fire-fighting team were Hull Maintenance Technician Third Class Shawn O'Hara and Hull Maintenance Technician Third Class Howard Leonard. Plymouth Rock's Hospital Corpsman Third Class Donald Scruggs, Hospitalman N. Hallinan, and Seaman Ross Lowery stood at the ready in case of injury.

USS Plymouth Rock returned to its Little Creek home port December 15 following a six-month circumnavigation of South America during UNITAS XXII operations.



ALL EYES ARE ON THE FIRE as USS Plymouth Rock crewmembers lend a hand. In the foreground, HT2 Jerry Shank and HT3 Thomas Dixon direct the hose spray toward the fire as CWO Michael Sprangers directs.

The LSD's of the US NAVY

What is an LSD? Simply put, LSD stands for Landing Ship, Dock

This is a type of ship that was conceived during World War 2 as a ship that could sail to the site of an amphibious landing, carry and launch assault boats directly from a well-deck in the rear of the vessel. To do this, the ship floods several tanks in the stern (rear) of the ship and ballasts the ship down, this floods the deck, and allows the boats aboard to come and go...

The newest assault boats the Navy has are called **LCAC's**. That stands for **L**anding **C**raft **A**ir **C**ushion. These are actually large hover-craft that can drive into the well deck even when not flooded. They can also drive up on to the beachhead to deliver troops upon it with dry feet, unlike the old days where they had to wade through the surf under fire. The LCAC's can even carry a couple of M-1 Abrams Tanks while riding on their cushion of air!

The navy has planned at one time or another to build 52 of these versatile ships and has actually finished 50 of them. They have even spawned a new type of ship based from the LSD, the LPD. See the article about the USS San Antonio (LPD17) below.

LPD 17—A Ship Built By and For the Expeditionary Warrior

by Gary L Pickens and Rear Admiral L. F. Picotte, USN (Ret.)



LPD 17 with MV-22.

Although the first Sailors and Marines won't actually step aboard USS *San Antonio* (LPD 17) until the year 2005, the first amphibious ship to be designed for the 21st century already reflects their input. The LPD 17 Class of Amphibious Transport Docks will be the product of many excellent ideas furnished by hundreds of Navy and Marine Corps Fleet operators, maintainers, and trainers through the Design for Ownership (DFO) process. With months to go before the actual keel is laid, Team 17 (NAVSEA's Program Office for LPD 17) has assimilated these contributions into LPD 17 Class ship and system design improvements.

Overview

The 12 ships of the LPD 17 Class will replace four retiring amphibious ship classes. With a length of over 680 feet and a beam of 105 feet, the LPD 17 Class will be substantially larger than the LPD 4 (*Austin*) Class. It will be able to carry approximately twice the number of Marine vehicles, along with approximately the same number of troops, cargo, and ammunition space, as the older LPD 4. The increased beam size will permit a larger flight deck able to support, from its aviation spots, all aircraft in the Marine inventory. The diesel-powered LPD 17 Class will also have the size and support facilities for future planned Marine aircraft, including the tilt rotor MV-22 Osprey.

LPD 17's well deck, stern gate, and ballast system will be able to support, to the amphibious penetration point, either traditional landing craft (LCUs) or two air cushioned landing crafts (LCACs) loaded with cargo and Marine vehicles and tanks. The well deck will also be compatible for launch and recovery of the Marine Corps's 21st century amphibian, the Advanced Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAAV). The combination of MV-22, LCAC, and AAAV greatly extend Navy and Marine Corps capabilities in support of Operational Maneuver from the Sea.

LPD 17 will have significant survivability features and the latest in computer technology. In addition to Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM) protection from air threats, the ship is being designed to minimize its appearance as a target. Using radar cross-section (RCS) reduction techniques, the ship will not only have a new look, but will be more difficult to locate and target.

Realizing that continuous leaps in technology are expected over the next 50 years, LPD 17's fiber optic shipboard-wide area network (SWAN) will connect onboard-integrated systems. Computers resident on the ship will be in a "plug in and fight" configuration, allowing hardware to be more easily and appropriately replaced by newer technology as necessary over the ship's lifetime. Moreover, LPD 17 will have extensive communications, command, control, and intelligence systems which will fully support current and projected expeditionary warfare missions of the 21st century.

LPD 17 Characteristics

Length: 684 ft

Sustained Speed: 22+ kts

Beam: 105 ft

Crew: 362

Full Load Draft: 23 ft

Troop: 720

Full Load Disp: 24,900 LT

LCAC: 2

Medical: 24 bed ward / 2 OR w/100 overflow beds

Aviation Ops: 2 CH-53 or MV-22 / 4 CH-46 or UH-1



Advanced Enclosed Mast/Sensor. The AEM/S system, currently planned for the LPD 17 Class and being tested aboard USS *Radford* (DD 968), offers significant benefits for LPD 17 in terms of workload reduction, mast accessibility, and reduced RCS enhancements. However, its installation design necessitated an alternative for signal flag display which required ownership

assistance. Late in 1997, members of the LPD 17 design team met with Fleet signalmen who had solved the problem by using collapsible signal posts to provide for full signal flag display capability when needed.

Air Conditioning. In 1997 both Fleet and Marine Corps commands expressed concerns about LPD 17 air conditioning capacity, recommending that LPD 17's capacity be greater than that of the LPD 4 Class. This recommendation reaffirmed planning for LPD 17 which already included 1,400 tons of air conditioning-over four times as much as the LPD 4 Class.

Attached Fuel Oil and Lube Oil Pumps. Fleet experience and data from various port engineers was the driving force in eliminating attached fuel oil and lube oil pumps. Traditionally, ships have used both an attached pump and an electric pump. However, the attached pump has often led to maintenance challenges. Using two electric pumps can capitalize on such efficiencies as common parts support, reduced maintenance workload, and reliability improvements. Electric pumps are planned for LPD 17.

Automated Anchor Washdown System. A Design for Ownership suggestion led to the incorporation of an automated anchor washdown system on the LPD 17's fo'c'sle.

CIC and Troop Operations Design. A series of five joint Navy and Marine Corps workshops reviewed and revised the LPD 17 arrangements for the Combat Information Center (CIC) and troop operations spaces. Based upon real-world experiences in the Captain O'Grady Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel Operation, the new space design allows for equal access to information and situational awareness for both Navy and Marine commanders, while providing for the flexibility to transform the spaces into a single, integrated command and control center.

Corrosion Control. Among the over 1,000 ownership generated issues, corrosion control was by far the most common. Many of the suggestions validated current LPD 17 ship design. For example, LPD 17 Class ships will have a titanium firemain; freshwater coolers will be used for the diesels; fittings and connectors will be protected from spray in the well deck; and topside external fittings will be non-corrosive. Additional initiatives are also being examined. These include improved tank coatings and corrosion-resistant designs in the well deck that will diminish this manpower-intensive burden.

Passageway Design. Team 17 designers have directly interfaced with Marine combat cargo assistants to ensure that a combat-loaded Marine can move comfortably through the LPD 17 passageways. In addition, the Marine Corps forwarded an advanced copy of their planned 21st century backpack to Avondale Industries to ensure that the ship design will also meet future anticipated requirements.

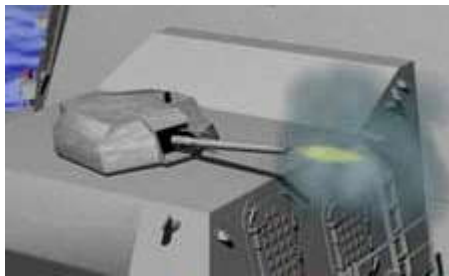
Ship's Boats. Based upon Fleet input, the conventional ship's boats that have been the mainstay of amphibious landings since Guadalcanal will not be carried aboard LPD 17. A team of Fleet operators and maintainers from both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets recommended replacing these boats with two 7-meter and one 11-meter rigid hulled inflatable boats (RHIBs). The approval of this action will save tons of ship's weight, reduce acquisition costs, and provide support for embarked SEAL mission RHIBs.

Medical Sterilization Room. During the 1998 Medical and Dental Workshop, Fleet participants identified a potential flow problem in the Sterilization Room as dirty medical instruments and material became sterilized. Fleet Surgical Team Six reviewed LPD 17's space, and crafted a

redesign that simplified the process flow and enhanced medical efficiency.

Stern Gate Indicators. LSD Class ship Sailors recommended the installation of stern gate indicators in well deck control. At the 1998 Well Deck/Ballast Control Workshop, Navy and Marine operators designed LDP 17's combined space "from the ground up," and incorporated stern gate indicators into their recommendations.

Close Defense System. The original LPD 17 design included 25mm chain guns for anti-surface self defense. A Fleet input in 1997 recommended a stabilized gun to increase lethality. Team 17, working with the Marine AAV program, determined that the AAV 30mm gun system had increased firepower, better range, and greater accuracy; could be fired remotely; and required fewer maintenance hours. Sharing the same gun system with the Marine Corps would also achieve cost and workload efficiencies. Although no final decisions have been made, the AAV gun is now being considered for LPD 17 Class ships.



AAV Close
Defense System
shipboard
configuration.

LPD 17 and Beyond

Continued interaction with Navy and Marine Corps Fleet users will remain the hallmark for the LPD 17 program. Design for Ownership sessions are already planned to review the pilot house and the Central Control Station (Main Control and Damage Control Central), while other sessions will examine additional key ship spaces. Ideas and suggestions received after LPD 17's design is finalized will be considered for incorporation into later ships of the Class, including the recently awarded LPD 18 (*USS New Orleans*).

Future Sailors and Marines who crew and embark on LPD 17 Class ships will quickly realize the value of the design contributions of their 20th century Sailor and Marine counterparts. LPD 17 is well on its way to becoming the right ship for the expeditionary warrior of the 21st century.

www.ussplymouthrock.com

The website has just added two new pages, one on the Scrapping of the USS Plymouth Rock, at Richmond Virginia in April 1996 and the other is a Memorial Page for our deceased shipmates. I have included the list of deceased shipmates I have record of. If any of you know of other shipmates now deceased, who should be on the list, please contact either Bill Provencal, 37 So. Main Street, Pittsfield, NH 03263, or e-mail me at billinp@worldpath.net or Harry Andersen, 2544 Chestnut Street, Waukeegan, IL 60087 or e-mail Harry at andycporetsnipe@aol.com

Known Deceased Shipmates

Jim Balf, MM2	Charles Suggs	Richard Dalton
Daniel J. Kubicki	Natalia Frolio	Allen Stewart
Milton Eldridge, YNC	Jerry Elliott	Harrison Young, MMCM
James Mueller, MS2		

Recently Located Shipmates

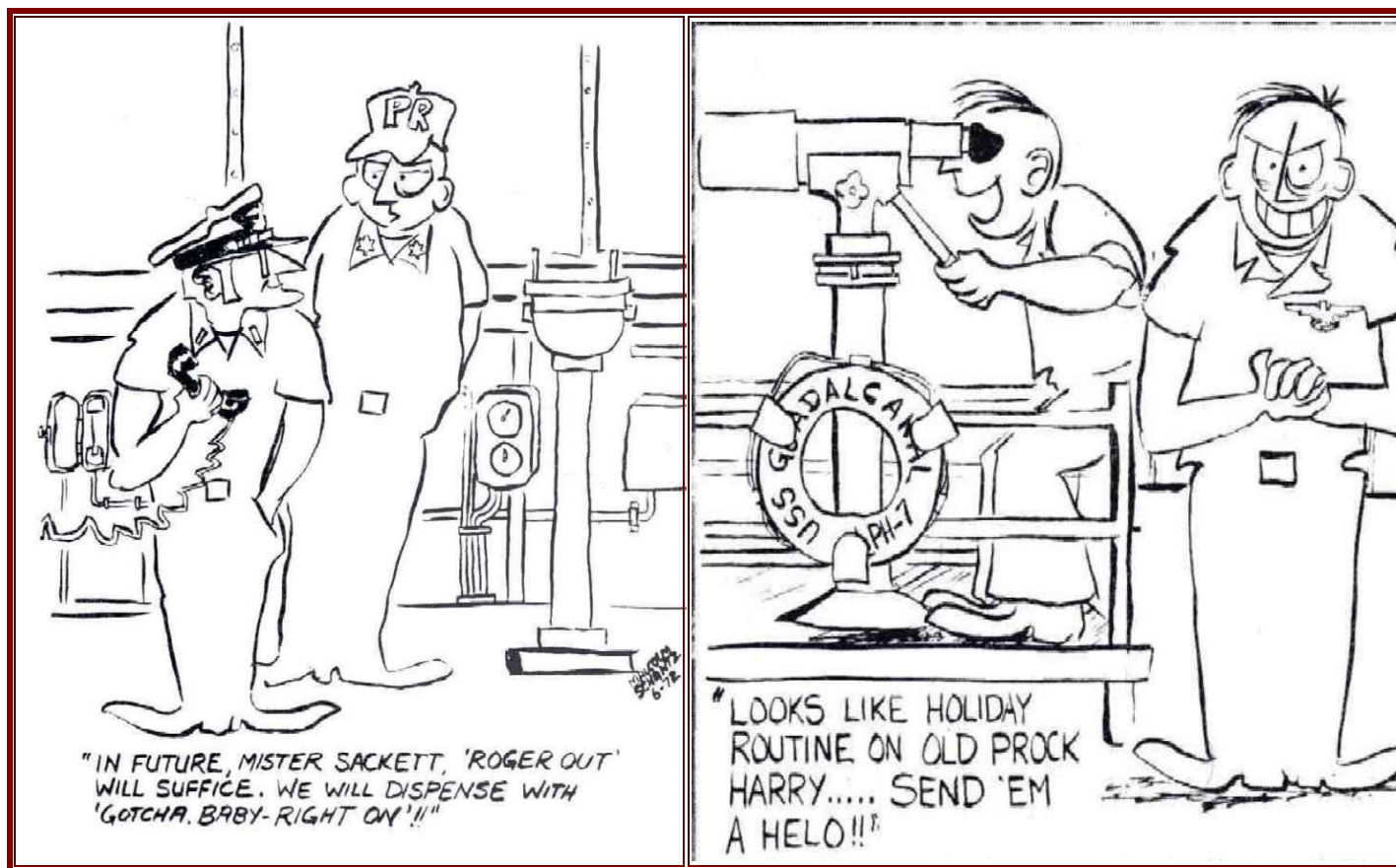
Angelo Faio, Jacksonville, FL e-mail: bkpopo1@aol.com
James Smith, Easton, MD e-mail: misterpeppers@hotmail.com
Benny Turner, Altamonte Springs, FL e-mail: bgtturner@earthlink.net
James D. Larsen, Gainesboro, TN e-mail: mlarsen@infoave.net
Ray (Louie) Lamagna, Export, PA e-mail jraylamagna@cs.com
John Jacobs, Howell, MI, e-mail: johany@webtv.net
Jerry Turner, Salt Lake City, UT e-mail: jturner@utah.com
Bruce Czarnetski, Davenport, IA e-mail: qcsteel@aol.com
Jon Czarnetski, Davenport, IA e-mail: czars69@aol.com
Sam Tesh, Huntersville, NC e-mail: stesh@lance.com
Harry Morgan, Jr., Virginia Beach, VA e-mail: steelpen@earthlink.net
Roger Walling, Chicopee, MA e-mail: atruckcollision@charter.net
Daniel Fleming, Herndon, VA e-mail: danfl5@msn.com
Doug Cannon, Brownsville, TX e-mail: trkerdoug@tahoo.com

Thank You's

We would like to thank the following shipmates for providing pictures and articles to the website and newsletter.

James Ziemba	Wallace Mason	Ron Swearingen	Joseph Ringer	Harry Andersen
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The following are cartoons from the 1972 Med Cruise Book and were drawn by LCDR John Malcolm Schantz. The images were provided by LTJG Wallace E. Mason
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Last Trip for Plymouth Rock

Shortly after being decommissioned, dock landing ship Plymouth Rock is towed out of the channel at Little Creek, Va, enroute to the Inactive Ships Facility in Portsmouth. Coincidentally the tugboat doing the towing, USS Chanagi, YTM360 is older than the USS Plymouth Rock



Picture and article contributed by Joseph Ringer, MR1, Falmouth, MA

Paid Association Members for 2003-2004

As of August 18, we now have 83 paid members

The 2003-2004 dues are due, please send dues to Paul Mohawk, Treasurer, make checks payable to USS Plymouth Rock Association. Dues are \$20.00, and run from reunion to reunion. The dues help to support the association with planning and having the next reunion, newsletter mailings, general postage and the cost of maintaining our website on line. Paul's address is found below this list.

Andersen, Harry	Baldwin, Brad	Balf, Jim	Bell, Joe	Berry, John
Bena, Joe	Bierce, George	Bild, Robert	Black, Robert	Bjorkman, Ray
Buchanan, Richard	Buiak, Peter	Bullington, Calvin	Caldwell, Timothy	Casillas, Greg
Chappel, John	Conboy, William	Conklin, Robert T.	Cummings, Stephen	Cypher, Harold
Czarnetski, Bruce	Czarnetski, Jon	Dalfonzo, James	Decuir, Wilton J	Edwards, Maurice
Edwards, R. A.	Eldridge, Margurite	Formaro, Frank	Forton, Andrew	Freeman, James
Greco, Salvador	Gregory, Peter	Haines, Ira	Hartson, George	Hopper, Richard
Jennings, Seeley	Jepson, Norm	Johnson, John	Joyce, Edward	Kaderka, Leonard
Krolak, Raymond	Kuhns, James	Lamay, Roger	Larson, Jerry J	Luttrell, James
Madill, Shorty	Mathis, Richard	McAvoy Sr., John	Mohawk, Paul	Murtha, Gerald
Musella, Rocco	Nichols, Bob	Noto, Ralph	O'Neil, Thomas	Power, Rand
Pratt, Richard P	Pressler, William	Provencal, Bill	Pyle, Ted	Raniszewski, Louis
Rhine, Don	Ringer, Joseph	Robertson, Allan	Robinson, Jim	Rose, Christopher
Sandlin, Richard	Scott, William	Shanahan, Robert	Shewchuk, Richard	Smith, James
Smith, Larry	Stark, Peter Jr.	Stovall, Jack	Stull, John III	Swathwood, David
Swearingen, Ronald	Tacinelli, Jerry	Tesh, Sam	Viaene, Robert	Vranesevic, Robert
Wagner, Paul	Wagner, Tom	Ziamba, James		

Any paid Association members (2003-2004) who is not on this list and who have paid their dues, please contact Paul Mohawk at 2505 Conifer Ave., Alexandria, MN 56308, or e-mail: hawk@rea-alp.com

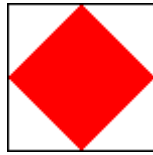
[Click Image to obtain larger picture](#)

USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29)

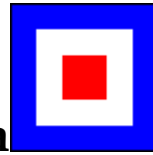
Photographed circa the later 1950s or early 1960s, with a HUS helicopter parked on her after deck.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph, from the collections of the Naval Historical Center.

Online Image: 130KB; 740 x 610 pixels



Navy Trivia



Bug juice

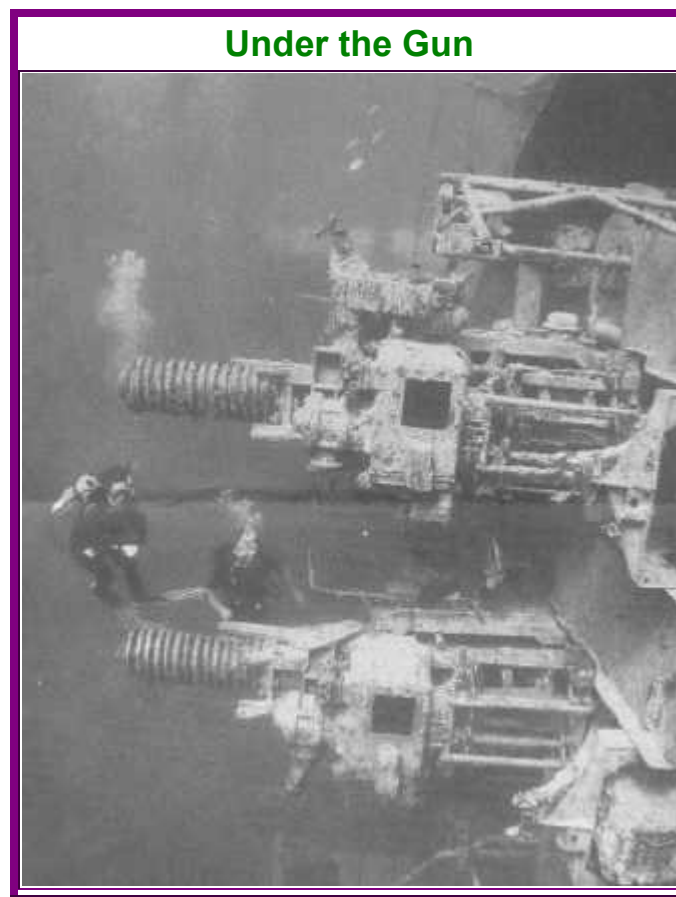
A substance similar in appearance to Kool-Aid which is served as a beverage aboard USN ships. Its color has no bearing on its flavor. Largely composed of ascorbic acid. Used extensively as an all-purpose cleaner/stripper for bulkheads, decks, brass fire nozzles, and pipes.

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 term's 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.

Divers exploring a gun turret on the USS Spiegel Grove (LSD32) near Key Largo, Fla. The Spiegel Grove, a landing ship dock that is 510 feet long and 84 feet wide, was sunk in 2002 and is the largest vessel ever intentionally sunk as an artificial reef.
Photograph contributed by James Ziembra, HM2



World War II Navy Recruiting Posters

