

# USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter May-August, 2014

Welcome to the USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter

Thirty-eight Edition: 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

**NOTE: IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY MAIL, THE REASON IS THAT YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR 2013-14 DUES TO THE ASSOCIATION. ANOTHER REASON IS THAT POSSIBLY WE HAVE MADE A MISTAKE (ie. Mailing Address) AND YOU NEED TO NOTIFY EITHER MYSELF OR DAVE DORTCH, ASSOCIATION TREASURER FOR US TO CORRECT.**

**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 <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  
[whhaynue@charter.net](mailto:whhaynue@charter.net)

Treasurer  
David Dortch



★ ★ ★ Welcome Aboard ★ ★ ★

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

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

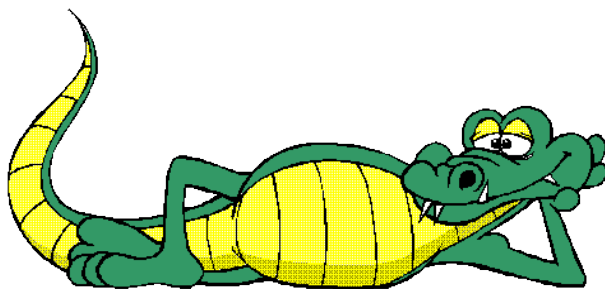
Ships Historian  
Norm Jepson  
586-755-3814  
[rnjepson@aol.com](mailto:rnjepson@aol.com)

Ships Storekeeper  
Dennis (Shorty) Cyr  
[shortybm3@yahoo.com](mailto:shortybm3@yahoo.com)  
203-753-6220

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



Bob Wagner, CPL, USMC, 2403 Stratford Ave., Coraopolis, PA 15108, On board January 1956.



### Recent Address Changes to the Ships Muster List

Harry Ishmael, BT3, on board 71-74. New address: 2825 State Highway FF, Jackson, MO 63755-7087, phone number: 573-204-4146.

Ronald Fredette, BT3, Proctor, VT New Phone Number: 802-459-2040. E-Mail Address: [boomrm@comcast.net](mailto:boomrm@comcast.net)

Thomas F. Wagner, YN3, on board 7/58-5/60. New e-mail address: [tfwagmer@wagner-insurance.net](mailto:tfwagmer@wagner-insurance.net).



### Known Deceased Shipmates

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

James M. Robinson, BT3, 307 High Street, Grafton, WV 26354, Deceased March 6, 2014	
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## 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.

Bill Lydon, FTG1	Harry Andersen, BTC	
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## A Sailor's Poem

Come gather round me lads and I'll tell you a thing or two about the way we ran the Navy in nineteen sixty two. When wooden ships and iron men were barely out of sight. I am going to give you some facts just to set the record right. We wore the ole bell bottoms, with a flat hat on our head, always hit the rack at night and never "went to bed." Our uniforms were worn ashore and we were mighty proud. Never thought of wearing civvies, in fact they were never allowed. What happened to the KiYi brush, and the old saltwater bath. We always had our gedunk stand and lots of pogeys and it always took a hitch or two just to make a rate.

In your sea bag all your skivvies, were neatly stopped and rolled, the blankets on your sack had better have a three-inch fold. Your little ditty bag, it is hard to believe just how much it held. You wouldn't go ashore with pants that hadn't been spiked and belled. We had scullery maids and succotash and good old SOS. And when you felt like topping off, you headed for the mess. Oh we had our belly robbers but there weren't too many gripes. For the deck apes were never hungry and there were no starving snipes.

Now you never hear of Davy Jones, Shellbacks or Polliwogs and you never splice the main brace to receive your daily grog. Now you never have to dog a watch or back in my time they were bent. We were all two-fisted drinkers and no one thought you sinned if you staggered back aboard your ship, three sheets to the wind. And with just a couple hours of sleep you regained your usual luster...bright eyed and bushy tailed,...you still made morning muster. Rocks and shoals have long since gone, and now it's UCMJ. Then the old man handled every thing if you should go astray.

Now they steer the ships with dials, and I wouldn't be surprised if some day they sailed them from the beach computerized. So when my earthly hitch is over, and the good Lord have but one request. Let me sail the seas of Heaven in a coat of Navy blue like I did so long ago on earth way back in nineteen-sixty-two.

Contributed by USS Whetstone, June 2014 Newsletter.



## **Paid Association Members for 2013-14**

**As of August 27, we now have 136 paid members**

**Become a Member of the Ships Association fill out an Application**

As you can imagine any group or association such as ours requires funds. The funds are used primarily for paying the costs of the Website (server fees, registration of our .com address), mailing out the newsletter to all paying dues members (printing, postage), general mailings up-front cost of upcoming reunion and postage. Our primary source of revenue are the bi-annual dues of **\$25.00**. To become a member of the USS Plymouth Rock Association complete the Application for Membership which can be found in the Ships Website on the Links Page or call/write/e-mail either my self or David Dortch and we will send you an application.

The 2013-2014 dues are now due, please send dues to David Dortch, Treasurer. Make checks payable to USS Plymouth Rock Association. Dues are payable on a bi-annual basis (every two years) at \$25.00 and are due on the year of the reunion (are due on an even year 2004, 2006, 2008, etc). *Should a member or prospective member pay at any other time, dues will be credited from the preceding even year.* All dues paying members receive the Newsletter three times a year by US Mail. David Dortch's address is 4009 Hickory Cove, Paragould, AR 72450

If your name does not appear on this list and you have paid your dues, please let David Dortch know as soon as possible. His e-mail address is [tazrhondave@yahoo.com](mailto:tazrhondave@yahoo.com)

Adam, Ian	Andersen, Harry	Anstett, William	Bali, Charles	Bell, Joe
Bena, Joe	Bentheimer, Glenn	Bergeron, Richard	Betts, Roger	Bierce, George
Bild, Bob	Brown, Alvin G.	Brusky, David	Brunton, Thomas	Buchanan, Richard
Buiak, Peter Jr.	Burch, Willard Jack	Caldwell, Tim	Cartwright, Richard	Casillas. Greg
Clark, Nick	Clark, Robert	Comstock, Ed	Conboy, Bill	Conroy, Michael
Cooke, Charles	Crowl II, Martin C.	Cuffy, Arvell	Cummings, Steve	Cyr, Dennis
Czarnetski, Bruce	Czarnetski, Jon	Dailey, Ronald J.	Dalfonzo, Sam	DiFranco, Joseph.
Dortch, David	Dushane, David	Dussault, Andrew	Farneski, Robert	
Eldridge, Marguerite	Fisher, Jack	Fisher, Jay	Fisher, Scott	Formaro, Frank
Forton, Mary	Freeman, James	Furman, Herbert III	Gee, James	Guertin, Jerry
Hall, Daniel	Hart, Ed.	Hartson, George	Haynie, Bill	Hernandez, Gabriel

Hernandez, Leo	Hickson, Thomas W., Sr	Hopper, Richard	Howland, Carole	Hyatt, Walter
Ishmael, Harry	Jennings, Seeley	Jepson, Norm	Joyce, Ed.	Kane, Thomas
Kaderka, Leonard	Kuhns, Jimmy	Kulczinsky, Andrew	Lamay, Roger	Larkin, Chuck
Larson, Jerry	Lavallee, Leo	Lillig, Bernie F	Luttrell, James	Macomber, Brandon
Malcolm, Kenneth	Miller, Ronald	Mohawk, Paul	Morton, Jack	Musella, Rocco
Neipert, Greg	Nichols, Bob	Nichols, Peter	Pawlak, Ervin	Peraino, Paul
Pihl, Walter C.	Pratt, Richard	Provencal, Bill	Pyle, Ted	Ralston, Robert
Ramondetta, Vic	Reed, John F.	Rhine, Don	Ringer, Joseph E.	Robertson, Allen
Robinson, Jim	Rook, Jack	Rose, Christopher	Safford, Richard	Schneider, Michael
Shanahan, Robert	Shewchuk, Richard	Shober, Robert	Short, Forrest	Sims, Bill
Smith, James	Smith, Larry E.	Stackhouse, Norman	Stark, Jr., Peter A.	Stull, John III
Swathwood, David	Swearingen, Ron	Terranova, Paul	Tesh, Sam	Thibodeau, Doug
Tunstall, Van	Viaene, Lois	Wagner, Thomas F.	Walker, Gerald M.	Walsh, Bill
Warwick, Robert	Watkins, Richard P.	Watson, Ernest	Watts, Richard A.	Wells, Andrew
Whitlock, Jerry S.	Whittle, David	Ziemba, James	Baldwin, Brad	Shader, David
Flanagan, Mike	Peterson, Gary	Williams, Craig	Brown, Robert	Courchesne, Mark A.
Rogers, David	Fredette, Robert			







**2014**

## **Reunion**

**Holiday Inn Norfolk Airport**  
**1570 N. Military Hwy., Norfolk, VA 23502**  
**Phone: 757-213-2231**  
**FAX: 757-213-2232**  
**www.hinorfolk.com**

### **General Reunion Information:**

**Dates: Thursday September 25, 2014 through Sunday September 28, 2014**  
**Departure. Check-in time is 4:00pm or later, Checkout time is 12:00 pm**

**Hospitality Room Available Thursday through Saturday. May bring our own snacks and beverages.**

**To obtain Application/Questionnaire for the reunion, click one of the following:**  
**[Click for MS Word Application](#); [Click for Adobe PDF file](#). Both files are printable.**

### **Hotel Information:**

**The Holiday Inn Airport, our hotel is 100% non-smoking and located 1.4 miles from the Norfolk International Airport (ORF) with complimentary airport/area shuttle within 5 mile radius. Complimentary 24-hour business center and free wired and wireless high-speed Internet access is available through out the hotel. Hotel also offers an indoor pool, fitness center, onsite restaurant and lounge.**

**Hotel Group Rates are \$92.00 per night plus 14% occupancy tax and \$2.00 flat city tax. Thirty-five rooms have been set aside for us. Group rate will be honored 3 days prior and 3 days after groups arrival and departure**

**Method of Reservation: Individual call-in. Reservations must be received by the hotel no later than August 25, 2014 to receive group rate.**

**Group rate includes complimentary "extensive" breakfast for up to two persons per guest room**

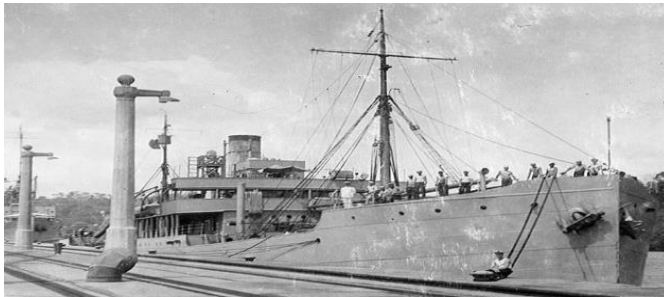
**Any further information, questions should be directed to**  
**Bill Haynie, Reunion Chair**  
**864-934-2900**  
**E-Mail: [whhaynie@charter.net](mailto:whhaynie@charter.net)**





■ Note from Bill Lydon, FTG1, Hamilton, NJ "I found this business card size award at the PR received by Our Navy Magazine. It must have been around 1969 because I was still a Third Class PO. I left in 1972 as a First Class. It is small but maybe you can blow it up for the newsletter." Bill's e-mail address is [bill.pg101@verizon.net](mailto:bill.pg101@verizon.net)

■ Received a note from Bob Wagner, CPL, USMC, Coraopolis, PA 15108. "I am trying to locate Dan O'Connell from Leetsdale, PA that was serving on your ship at that time. I don't remember his Navy rank. Is it possible you have a list of sailors that served on board at that time? January 1956" Bob's e-mail address is [honusw1@comcast.net](mailto:honusw1@comcast.net)



**OLD NAVY, NEW**



**NAVY**

Then: If you smoked, you had an ashtray on your desk.

Now: If you smoke, you get sent outside and treated like a leper, if you're lucky.

Then: Mail took weeks to come to the ship.

Now: Every time you get near land, there's a mob topside to see if their cell phones work.

Then: If you left the ship it was in Blues or Whites, even in home port.

Now: The only time you wear Blues or Whites is for ceremonies.

Then: You wore bell bottoms everywhere on the ship.

Now: Bell bottoms are gone and 14 year-old girls wear them everywhere.

Then: You wore a Dixie cup all day, with every uniform.

Now: It's not required and you have a choice of different hats.

Then: If you said "damn", people knew you were annoyed and avoided you.

Now: If you say "damn" you'd better be talking about a hydro electric plant.

Then: The Ships Office yeoman had a typewriter on his desk for doing daily reports.

Now: Everyone has a computer with Internet access and they wonder why no work is getting done.

Then: We painted pictures of pretty girls on airplanes to remind us of home.

Now: We put the real thing in the cockpit.

Then: Your girlfriend was at home, praying you would return alive.

Now: She is on the same ship, praying your condom worked.

Then: If you got drunk off duty, your buddies would take you back to the ship so you could sleep it off.

Now: If you get drunk off duty, they slap you in rehab and ruin your career.

Then: Canteens were made out of steel and you could heat coffee or hot Chocolate in them.

Now: Canteens are made of plastic, you can't heat them because they'll melt, and anything inside always tastes

like plastic.

Then: Our top officers were professional sailors first. They commanded respect.

Now: Our top officers are politicians first. They beg not to be given a wedgie.

Then: They collected enemy intelligence and analyzed it.

Now: They collect our pee and analyze it.

Then: If you didn't act right, they'd put you on extra duty until you straightened up.

Now: If you don't act right, they start a paper trail that follows you forever.

Then: Medals were awarded to heroes who saved lives at the risk of their own.

Now: Medals are awarded to people who show up for work most of the time.

Then: You slept in a barracks, like a soldier.

Now: You sleep in a dormitory, like a college kid.

Then: You ate in a Mess Hall or Galley. It was free and you could have all the food you wanted.

Now: You eat in a Dining Facility. Every slice of bread or pat of butter costs, and you can only have one.

Then: If you wanted to relax, you went to the RecCenter, played pool, smoked and drank beer.

Now: You go to the Community Center and can still play pool, maybe.

Then: If you wanted a quarter beer and conversation, you could go to the Chief's or Officers' Club.

Now: The beer will cost you three dollars and someone is watching to see how much you drink.

Then: The Exchange had bargains for sailors who didn't make much money.

Now: You can get better merchandise and cheaper at Wal-Mart.

Then: If an Admiral wanted to make a presentation, he scribbled down some notes and a YN spent an hour preparing a bunch of charts.

Now: The Admiral has his entire staff spending days preparing a Power Point Presentation.

Then: We called the enemy things like "Commie Bastards" and "Reds" because we didn't like them.

Now: We call the enemy things like "Opposing Forces" and "Aggressors, Adversaries, or Insurgents" so we won't offend them.

Then: We declared victory when the enemy was dead and all his things were



broken.

Now: We declare victory when the enemy says he is sorry and won't do it again.

Then: A commander would put his butt on the line to protect his people.

Now: A commander will put his people on the line to protect his butt.

Thank God I served in the "Old Navy": and proud of it.



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/USS-Plymouth-Rock-LSD-29/324693307556363> Located a number of photos from this facebook account. Worth looking at. This is but a small sample of what is found in this facebook. To view open the address above.



**Gyro compass final IC gang artwork  
1981**



**Carribean Island Hopping (1979)**



**Carribean Island Hopping (1979)**



**Tailgate, Bermuda Cruise 7/9-8/29, 1979**



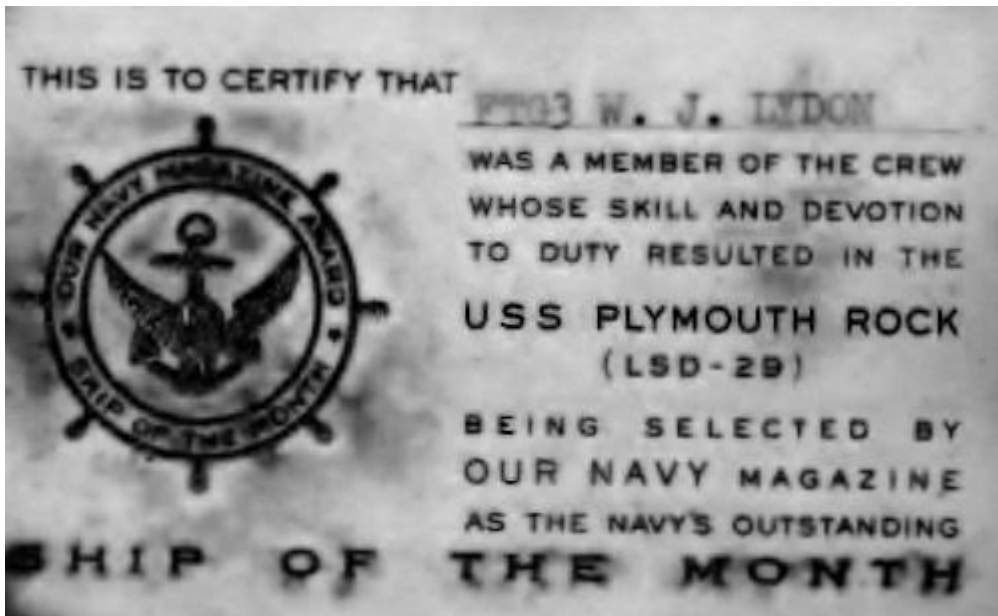


**PRock in Valparaiso, Chile, UNITAS  
XXII, October, 1981**



**Loaded out welldeck, 1980**





Plymouth Rock card provided by bill Lydon, FTG1 while on board the Plymouth Rock from 1969-72. This is a link to that issue of "Our Navy Magazine" from 1969 [Plymouth Rock, "Our Navy" Ship of the Month November 1969](#)



From the desk of Tom Wagner, Association President



PREZ SEZ:

In less than a month, we will be mustering in Norfolk for our 2014 Reunion. The ROCK no longer exists physically, but she has been granted momentary immortality in our minds, our photos and at our bi-annual reunions. This is your chance to expound upon your memories with former shipmates, to fill in a missing part for a shipmate or he fills in one for you. I am always amazed when someone else provides a perspective that becomes that missing part that I had long forgotten. Is that information earth shattering or life saving? By no means, but it was about us, during our time, aboard the ROCK. So it is memorable to us and maybe a few

others.

So why not join us at this reunion, at a venue that could not be more appropriate. NORFOLK, VA! Who knows, maybe you or I can provide that small piece of memorable information.

So I hope to see you at the USS Plymouth Rock 2014 Reunion where we can all hear the latest scuttlebutt. Word from Bill Haynie, Reunion Coordinator, is that we have in excess



of 35 hotel rooms booked. So remember, there are no strangers, just former shipmates sharing experiences from a time when we were young swabbies.

**Make your preparations to get under-way!**

**Tom Wagner, President**



A young man with a wild and multi-coloured hairstyle sits next to an old man on a park bench. The old man stares at the young man.

"What's the matter, old man?" says the young man. "Never done anything crazy in your life?"

The old man replies: "Yeah. When I was in the Navy, I got really drunk one night and had sex with a parrot. I thought you might be my son."

\*\*\*

There once was a pirate named Bates,  
Who danced the Fandango on skates.  
He fell on his cutlass  
Which rendered him nutless  
And practically useless on dates!

\*\*\*

An American warship is tied up next to an English warship. An American sailor leans over and yells to a British sailor "How's the world's second largest Navy doing?" The Brit replies: "Just fine, mate. How's the world's second best doing?"



## ZUMWALT-CLASS LAND ATTACK DESTROYER BECOMES A REALITY

Eleven-years ago, the lead ship of the *Arleigh Burke*-class of guided missile destroyers was commissioned. Since that time, 67 destroyers in this class have been built. As of the winter 2013, the US Navy has acquired nearly 1150 destroyers of all classes beginning with the USS *Bainbridge* (DD-1). If ever there was a warship that defined the US Navy, it has to be the destroyer. Aside from the fact that the destroyer is an engine of death and destruction, the vast majority of this ship type have been yacht-like and aesthetically pleasing. Their sleek lines (especially the *Fletcher*-class) have set them apart from other warships. That is until the *Zumwalt*-class. To some, it may seem beautiful, and I do not wish to insult those who find this ship appealing, but to me it resembles a cheese box on a raft. That

is what the USS *Monitor*'s detractors mused in 1862, and they were certain that John Ericsson's folly would allow the Confederate States Navy ironclad CSS *Virginia* to ravage shipping and lay waste to most of the coastal cities and ports. But more importantly, the *Virginia* would be the most-powerful warship in the Americas and break the Union Navy blockade. The cheese box on a raft confronted the *Virginia* and after hours of battle, the Confederate ship was forced to abandon the field of battle. So much for looks.

The *Zumwalt* (DDG-1000) land attack destroyer is in response to the Marines' perceived need for shore bombardment in support of amphibious operations. The Marines have been clamoring for shore bombardment assets since the last two *Iowa*-class battleships became museum ships. But then again, the last time that the Marines stormed

a beach after it had been softened up by battleship gunfire was in 1945 at Okinawa — 68-yrs ago.

The range of the *Zumwalt*'s two 155mm guns is 63-nm with the shell controlled by a GPS to ensure absolute accuracy. The weapon, known as an Advanced Gun System, has been tested 14 times with 100% accuracy. The Navy now has 22 of the especially built Long Range Land Attack Projectile (LRLAP) shells. Gone are the days of carpet shooting with the intent to smother the target with naval gunfire.

The *Zumwalt* has just taken to the water after its dry dock was flooded. This ship resembles a vessel built by John Ericsson known as the *Destroyer*, which was the precursor to the modern destroyer.



Article and picture 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](mailto:shortybm3@yahoo.com) All orders must be accompanied by a check. Checks must be made out to the USS Plymouth Rock Association. You can click on any image to obtain a larger view of the item.



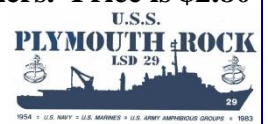


Through a donation from a shipmate, we were able to acquire a small number of ship patches (see left). We are selling these patches for \$15.00 each, and are limiting sales to one patch per person. All orders are handled through Shorty Cyr, BM3, 119 Pinecrest Drive, Waterbury, CT 06708, Phone #203-753-6220, e-mail at: [shortybm3@yahoo.com](mailto:shortybm3@yahoo.com) Call him before sending money to insure that patches are available, since the number is limited (17). Orders are on a first come, first served basis.

**Plymouth Rock Mug. Price is \$15.00 includes shipping and handling.**



**Bumper Stickers. Price is \$2.80 includes shipping and handling.**



**Ships Patch. Price is \$8.75 includes shipping and handling.**



**Plymouth Rock Cap. Price is \$15.00 this price includes shipping and handling.**



**Short sleeve tee shirt. Price is \$22.00 which includes shipping and handling. The following sizes are available: Med./Lge./XL/XXL and XXXL.**



**Personalized Commemorative Plaques. Price is dependent on size, 7x9 is \$15.00 + \$5.00 shipping**



**g, 8 x 10 is \$20.00 + \$5.00 shipping. To order contact Shorty Cyr, BM3, he will send you an order form.**

### "Old Salts Spinning a Yarn"

Sailors and a Marine telling stories around a spittoon on board a U.S. Navy ship, circa the 1880s.

Courtesy of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and Admiral Harold R. Stark.

U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph.



### "Spinning a Yarn"

Seven "Old Salts" engaged in telling tall tales aboard USS Enterprise (1877-1909), circa spring 1890.

Photographed by E.H. Hart, New York.

Suitable verses from ["The Tale of the Gyascutus"](#) are printed below the original photographic image.

U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph.



## Navy Trivia

**1MC:** The basic one-way communications system on a vessel. Reaches all spaces on a ship. Used for general announcements, and to transmit general alarm system signals. Control stations are located on the bridge, quarterdeck, and central station. Other transmitters may be installed at additional points. There are other MC and JV circuits used for communications within the ship. They are typically system-specific, i.e. weapons systems, navigation communication, engineering systems, firefighting, etc.

**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.

**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.

**Dead Horse:** When a Sailor pays off a debt to the command (advance pay, overpayments, etc...) they say they've paid off a Dead Horse. The saying comes from a tradition of British sailors. British seamen, apt to be ashore and unemployed for considerable periods of time between voyages, generally preferred to live in boarding houses near the piers while waiting for sailing ships to take on crews. During these periods of unrestricted liberty, many ran out of money, so innkeepers carried them on credit until hired out for another voyage. When a seaman was booked on a ship, he was customarily advanced a month's wages, if needed, to pay off his boarding house debt. Then, while paying back the ship's master, he worked for nothing but "salt horse" the first several weeks aboard. Salt horse was the staple diet of early sailors and it wasn't exactly tasty cuisine. Consisting of a low quality beef that had been heavily salted, the salt horse was tough to chew and even harder to digest. When the debt had been repaid, the salt horse was said to be dead and it was a time for great celebration among the crew. Usually, an effigy of a horse was constructed from odds and ends, set afire and then cast afloat to the cheers and hilarity of the ex-debtors.

**Head:** The "head" aboard a Navy ship is the bathroom. The term comes from the days of sailing ships when the place for the crew to relieve themselves was all the way forward on either side of the bowsprit, the integral part of the hull to which the figurehead was fastened.