



Fall 2006

Published by
The USS PYRO
(AE-1 & AE-24)
Association

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USS PYRO Scuttlebutt



Reserve rooms and tours early!

Plans finalized for reunion 2007 Detailed plans, sign up forms inside

**In
this
edition**

**See yuh in
Philly!**

**Everything you
need to know
about**

**Reunion
2007**

Philadelphia!

**May 2-6 ,
2007**

Pages

1, 2, 3 and 4

Sign-up form

Page 5

All systems are *go* for the USS Pyro Association's 2007 reunion in Philadelphia.

With the same precision and planning that led to regular paydays and often edible meals on the AE-24, Reunion Chairman Larry Shepline has put together a truly outstanding program that combines the fel-

lowship that is at the heart of all Pyro reunions with a memorable memorial service for departed shipmates, a great deal on a big-city three-star hotel and group activities that will help us all get the most out of our Philadelphia vacation. Now it's up to you! Make your plans early so we can See yuh in Philly May 2-6, 2007.

Ray Gillman's final cruise

Chief Ray [Rags] Gillman departed on his final cruise from Mayport, Fl., October 6 aboard the Navy frigate USS Bradley (FFG-49),

By time you read this, his remains will have been spread at sea in the Atlantic Ocean after a Navy formal burial ceremony.



Ray and Betty's wishes were granted in record time — one month after Betty made the request and was informed that it would be about six to nine month's to accomplish her request. However, I reckon Ray pulled his seniority Navy time and had the request expedited.

Hum! Wonder how many sonar men picked up the action. What a way for Ray to make his final departure in this Navy burial at sea tradition. Chief, we your former shipmates of the USS Pyro AE-24 and the association salute you! We wish you God's speed as you cruise to your next duty station in the upper beyond. — Bob Hauge

Destination Philadelphia

Do you know that Philadelphia . . .

Is home to America's "most historic square mile?"

Boasts more Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings than any city, other than Paris?

Is where the US Navy was first created and the initial four ships were outfitted?

Is home of the first government-operated naval shipyard?

Philadelphia is the fifth largest city in the United States, but its walkable downtown and intriguing neighborhoods give it the charm of a small town.



The United States was born at the Pennsylvania State House, better known today as Independence Hall. In Independence National Historical Park visitors can see two of the nation's most important monuments: the Liberty Bell, located in the new \$13 million pavilion, and Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776 and the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787. In 1790 Philadelphia became the temporary capital of the United States for nearly ten years. The park includes 20 buildings open to the public including some overlooked gems. The Independence Living History Center offers the chance to watch archaeologists process newly discovered Colonial artifacts. On display at the Second Bank of the United States is George Washington's death mask.



While Philadelphia has hundreds of outdoor sculptures, including "Rocky Balboa", it offers a world-class collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Barnes Foundation and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Just beyond Philadelphia is Valley Forge National Historic Park, where Washington's men struggled to survive during the winter of 1777-78.

Philadelphia is a central transportation hub for the northeast corridor, which affords easy and economical access to members who have not recently had an opportunity to attend a USS PYRO reunion. Interstate I-95, which links the entire east coast, passes within one half mile of our reunion hotel. Amtrak trains operate nearly hourly from Philadelphia's 30th Street Station with service along the Northeast Corridor and connecting points west and south. Two Discount air carriers, Southwest and Air Tran, as well as the major carriers serve Philadelphia Airport, which is 6½ miles from central Philadelphia's Historic District.





**Reservations for Reunion Hotel
Holiday Inn Historic District**
www.holidayinn.com/philadelphia-historicdistrict.
 1-800-THE-BELL (843-2355)



REUNION HOTEL LOCATION: Our reunion hotel is a three-star, eight-story, full service, hotel located within walking distance of over two dozen bistro/ethnic/fusion-type restaurants; several antique shops and galleries; and immediately adjacent to Independence National Historical Park. This 45-acre national park features the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall - where the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution were created - as well as over a dozen other buildings closely associated with the Colonial period that are open to the public. Home to some of the first neighborhoods in the city, the Historic District is a combination of old-fashioned cobblestone streets and bright neon cafes and bustling galleries.

REUNION ROOM RATES: The USS PYRO Association's group room rate is \$129.00 per night for single or double occupancy, plus 14% state and local taxes. Additional room occupants will pay an additional \$17.00 per person per day. This rate includes a complimentary hot buffet breakfast. The hotel will honor these group rates two days prior and two days post reunion departure. A discounted parking rate of \$10.00 per day is provided for the Pyro Association versus the normal \$20.00 per day rate in the high-rise parking garage. However, parking is limited to vehicles less than 6.5 feet in height. **Our group room rates are less than two-thirds the typical three-star hotel rates for this ideal Philadelphia visiting period.**



Where to learn more...

Get more information on Philadelphia, the National Historic Park, Battleship New Jersey and the Holiday Inn Historic District at these web sites:

www.gophila.com [Greater Philadelphia Marketing Organization]

www.pcvb.org [Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau]

www.independencevisitorcenter.com
[Independence National Park]

www.battleshipnewjersey.org
[Battleship New Jersey]

www.holidayinn.com/philadelphia-historicdistrict

See yah in Philly Reunion check list

- Make sure there's room at the (Holiday) Inn: Call 1/800-THE-BELL — that's 1-800/843-2355 for folks who find numbers expressed as letters annoying — to reserve your room. Do it before**
- Be sure to mention the USS PYRO Association when making your reservation to make sure you get the great group rate.**
- DEADLINE:**
- Sign up for tours, banquet and other great activities. The form is on page 5.**
- DEADLINE: 1 April 2007**
- Check out great restaurants and tourist attractions to visit on your own.**
- Call or write shipmates and tell them "See yuh in Philly!"**

**Reunion 2007 Philadelphia
May 2-6, 2007**

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Afternoon: Arrive and check-in; rooms available at 4:00 PM

3:30 - Reunion Registration Desk open in Betsy Ross Room

4:30-6:00 - Hospitality Reception in Betsy Ross Room off hotel lounge with locally brewed Yuengling beer, chips, hard & soft pretzels and lemonade. [Event #1: \$14.00 per person]

May 2, 2007, Wednesday Evening

Dinner on your own at one of the many area restaurants within walking distance.

Executive Committee Meeting, Location TBD

May 3, 2007, Thursday

Complementary Breakfast in hotel dining room

9:00 AM – Approximately 2 ½ hour Orientation Tour of Philadelphia area in Motor Coach equipped with rest room. Return to hotel area for lunch. [Event #2- \$18.00 per person]

May 3, 2007, Thursday

1:30 PM Motor Coach picks us up at the hotel and transports us across Delaware River to brow of Battleship New Jersey USS Pyro Memorial Service on deck with seating, PA speaker, and biodegradable wreath to honor our deceased ship-mates [Memorial Service Subsidized]

Guided tour of top-side spaces and gun turret

Motor coach returns us to hotel about 5:00 PM [Event #3 \$24.00 per person]

Dinner on your own at one of many area restaurants within walking distance

May 4, 2007, Friday

Complementary Breakfast in hotel dining room

9:00 AM: Period-Attired Guides will meet us at hotel to begin a three-hour walking tour of the "... most historic square mile in the United States", including Liberty Bell, Carpenters' Hall, Franklin Court, Betsy Ross house, Christ Church and Elfreth's Alley

After lunch break at area food court in historic building, we will tour Independence Hall and Congress Hall, with prearranged admission tickets. [Event #4 \$12.00 per person]

Remainder of afternoon free to visit the Liberty Bell Pavilion, U.S. Mint or other sites in the National Historical Park area

Dinner on your own at one of many area restaurants

Saturday, May 5, 2007, Saturday evening

Complementary Breakfast in hotel dining room

9:00 AM – Association Business Meeting in hotel meeting room

Remainder of day free for sightseeing, shopping or visiting with association members.

6:30-7:15 - Cocktails [Cash bar] and photographs

7:30-8:45 - Banquet dinner and Association Commentary [Event #5 \$40.00 per person] Pan-Seared 8 ounce Entrée selections: Filet of Salmon Served in a Creamy Dill Sauce

Spiced Roasted Rib-Eye of Beef Served in a Burgundy Demi Glaze

A pasta-based vegetarian option can be provided if necessary

8:45-11:15 - Music for dancing and socializing {Music Cost Subsidized}

May 6, 2007, Sunday Morning

Complementary Breakfast in hotel dining room

Checkout [Check-out time is 12:00] and depart or remain in Philadelphia for an extended holiday. [Reunion hotel rate valid for two additional days, both before and after reunion]

USS PYRO AE-1 & AE-24 Reunion
2-6 May 2007 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

REGISTRATION

Pease Type or Print Clearly

Name.....

Spouse/Guest.....

Address.....City..... State.....ZIP.....

REUNION OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

2 May 2007

[Wednesday, Late Afternoon] – Log-In & Get Acquainted with old Shipmates in Betsy Ross Room, Holiday Inn Historic District

Hospitality Room Reception, \$ 14.00 per Person, Number of Persons....., Total \$.....

3 May 2007

[Thursday Morning] - 2½ Hour Motor Coach Tour of Philadelphia Area,

\$ 18.00 per Person, Number of persons for Philadelphia Area Tour, Total \$.....

[Thursday Afternoon] - Motor Coach to Battleship New Jersey, Guided Tour of Ships Top-side Spaces & USS PYRO Memorial Service [Memorial Service Subsidized],

\$ 24.00 per Person, Number of Persons for Battleship Tour & Memorial Service Total \$.....

4 May 2007

[Friday Morning] - Three Hour, Guided Walking Tour of Historic District and Early Afternoon Admission to Independence Hall & Liberty Bell Pavilion

\$12.00 per person, Number of Persons....., Total \$.....

5 May 2007

[Saturday Evening] -

6:30 Cocktails [Cash Bar],

7:30 Banquet Dinner, [Note: Dinner meal selection will be made during Reunion Log-in on 2 May afternoon]

8:45 Dance, [Music Cost Subsidized]

\$ 40.00 per Person, Number of Persons..... Total \$.....

Total Amount of Enclosed Check - \$.....

Make checks payable to USS Pyro Association and mail to:

Larry Shepline

72 Leearden Road

Hershey, PA 17033-2176

Cut-off Date for optional event reservations and payment

1 April 2007



News you can use

Items of interest to veterans and retirees

TRICARE for Life beneficiaries must use Medicare participating providers

TRICARE for Life (TFL) beneficiaries may recently have noticed some changes in which providers they will be allowed to see in order to have claims paid for health care received. But first, a little background. Medicare currently has three types of providers: opt-out providers, participating providers; and nonparticipating providers.

Opt-out providers have chosen to not see Medicare patients and cannot submit claims to the Medicare program. They are considered non-authorized and nonparticipating. Participating providers are Medicare-authorized providers who agree to accept the Medicare-allowable charge as payment in full, and who agree to file claims. A nonparticipating provider does not agree to accept the allowable charge as payment in full, and may or may not file claims.

Now to the changes that affect TRICARE beneficiaries. Until recently, when a TRICARE for Life beneficiary would receive care from a physician who has opted out of Medicare, TRICARE would become the primary payer for the claim, normally paying 75 percent of allowed charges, the TRICARE Standard rate. Recently, however, the TRICARE Reimbursement manual (Chapter 4, section 4,1.C.1.e.), has been changed.

The new section reads as follows: "If the service or supply normally is a benefit under both Medicare and TRICARE, but Medicare does not make any payment because the provider has a private contract with the beneficiary (also referred to as "opting out" of Medicare), TRICARE cannot make any payment on the claim. In such cases, the contractor is to deny the claim. "This change takes effect on September 30, 2006.

Until then, TRICARE will continue to pay claims at the TRICARE Standard rate for any Medicare-eligible beneficiary who is treated by a provider who has opted-out of Medicare. After that date, a TFL beneficiary who seeks care from a provider who has opted out of Medicare will be responsible for the entire bill.

To ensure their health care claims will be paid by both Medicare and TRICARE, beneficiaries should make sure they are seeing a Medicare participating provider. For a list of Medicare participating providers, beneficiaries may call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or visit www.medicare.gov/Physician/. *By YNCS Don Harribine, USN(ret) from the National Military Family Association.*

Are your records up to date?

The Defense Accounting and Finance Service (DFAS) reminds all military retirees and annuitants to review their retirement or annuitant pay account status to ensure all information is up-to-date. DFAS relies on current personal information to provide their customer service. Officials emphasize that it's imperative that retirees notify the agency as soon as possible about any change in marital or family status, beneficiaries, mailing address and bank account information. This ensures that the individual's retirement pay is processed correctly and on time. If beneficiary information needs to be updated, customers can access the new Designation of Beneficiary form online at <http://www.dod.mil/dfas/retiredpay/>. Changes to much of a retiree's pay account can be made via myPay at <http://mypay.dfas.mil> or by calling the Retired/Annuitant Pay Customer Service Center at 1(800) 321-1080. Retirees may also send an e-mail via myPay or by regular mail to: DFAS, U. S. Military Retirement Pay, P O Box 7130, London, KY 40742-7130. Any account changes must be completed and submitted by the end of November 2006 in order to be effective for the end-of-year processing (1099R's, RAS's, etc.). This includes both retired and annuitant pay accounts. — *Retiree Assistance Office Newsletter.* **To subscribe, e-mail: ra-oemo@sbcglobal.net**



"So let's hoist the bravo zulu pennants to give credit where credit is due..."



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From the president's desk

By Jared Cameron

Think back to those golden days of yesteryear when we sailed the seven seas – or at least the South China Sea – on a Pyro. Among the many images that live in the mist of memory, one is conspicuously absent: I doubt if any of us recall a Pyro skipper chipping paint, taking the helm, stoking a boiler, cooking up mid-rats or personally clearing the bore of a deck gun.

Of course, I am not so deluded as to compare my role as association president – bestowed by the membership in attendance at Branson mostly due to an inability to Shanghai any other sapient creature for the job -- to that of the a Pyro captain.

Yet – despite the differences in role and responsibility – one similarity exists: A Pyro warlord and the 'head boy' of the association are both rated more on what they persuade others to do than what they do themselves. A Navy captain has a rich variety means of persuasion in his arsenal ranging from relegation to mess cooking to general court martial. But barring an unlikely change in the bylaws, your association president most relies on appeals to nostalgia, sniveling and begging (also known as 'leadership') to recruit recruits.

Which brings us to the point of this rambling: For the past roughly 18 months, this association president has been truly blessed with outstanding work from some great people.

So let's hoist the bravo-zulu pennants to give credit where credit is due to just a few of them today. More will follow in subsequent editions.

Putting together the Scuttlebutt is fun, but it's even more fun if members contribute their tales and recollections, leaving the editor to, well, edit. Thanks to Jasper Strunk, Ed Stone, Tom Sanborn, Doug Wisher and all the other members who have contributed over the years. Of course, when the role of Scuttlebutt contributors is read, Bob Hauge's name leads all the rest. Bob has been both unselfish and skilled in writing recollections, telling tales and, sadly, penning tributes to fallen shipmates. Thank you, Bob!

Speaking of the Scuttlebutt, one hero isn't even a member of the association. Lisa Michael, daughter-in-law of Patricia and Gary Michael, produces and mails the print edition. And she does it with efficiency, skill and grace. Thank you, Lisa!

Larry Shepline, whose fingerprints as reunion chairman can be detected throughout this Scuttlebutt, has brought enthusiasm, skill, humor and a meticulous attention to detail to every project he has undertaken for the association. His arrangements for the 2007 reunion verge on immaculate. And behind the scenes, his painstaking proofreading of The Scuttlebutt, has made a tremendous contribution to this publication's readability and accuracy. Thank you Larry!

Thanks for jobs well done to Lisa Michael, Bob Hauge and Larry Shepline





In memory of the fallen

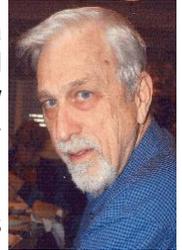


Charles A. Moshenrose (1931–2006)

Charles A. Moshenrose, 75, of Ocean Springs, MS, who served on the AE 24 from 1966 to 1969 as a lieutenant and lieutenant commander, retiring after 26 years of Naval service died Monday, October 2, 2006 in Biloxi. Charlie Moshenrose had been a member of the community in Ocean Springs for the past thirty-three years. He was active with AARP Tax Assistance, volunteered at the Ocean Springs Library and was an avid sailing and motorcycle enthusiast.

Mr. Moshenrose is survived by his wife of fifty-two years, Helen Moshenrose; his daughter, Loretta McDaniel; his son, Paul Moshenrose and his wife Cheryl; three grandchildren, Ashley, Brandee and Paul "PJ" Moshenrose; one great-grandchild, Jeffery Caleb Stein, all of Ocean Springs; he is also survived by three sisters, Mary Jane Mattingly and Suzie Roberts, both of Indianapolis, IN, and Nancy Maley of California.

Tom Sanborn, who served under Mr. Moshenrose on the Pyro, remembers him as setting an example. "Chuck was a real role model and got me headed down the right road in effective leadership," recalls Tom.



Louise J. Hisel

It is with a heavy heart that I tell you and the Pyro family that my Mom, Louise J. Hisel, passed away August 28, 2006 after an incredibly long time in hospice care. She fought long and hard not wanting to leave us. Now she no longer suffers and is with my Dad, Paul C. Hisel, Sr.

As she could not speak well during the last couple of years of her life due to an advanced stage of Huntingtons Chorea I'm sure Dad is getting an earful that could take a while! <grin>

She was interred with Dad on August 30 at Bushnell National Cemetery.

I'm sorry I didn't let you know earlier but the loss of my Mom hit me like a train. They say you should be prepared for it especially after a long time in hospice care but I disagree. Nothing can prepare a man for the loss of his Mom. — *Paul Hisel*

Cecille Ruth Dodge

Sad to advise that my wife of 38 years, Cecille Ruth Dodge, passed away Sunday, July 16, 2006, in our home here on Nimitz Hill, Guam — *Marvin (Mike) Dodge*

Richard M. Barksdale

(1926—2006)

On May 1, 2006 Richard M. Barksdale passed away in Reno Nevada. It was determined to be an accident, as he fell down a flight of stairs at his home causing a fatal brain injury. I know he would appreciate being mentioned in your publication as he always talked about the Pyro and his shipmates. — *Roger Siebe, Mr. Barksdale's son-in-law.*

Wesley James Allard

(1919—2005)

Wesley James Allard died October 18, 2006 at home in Silver Springs Township, PA, after a prolonged illness.

Wes was born on February 2, 1919, in Arkansaw, WI, the son of a Methodist minister, the late Joseph and Lena (Plummer) Allard.

He enjoyed carpentry, woodcarving, art, music, White Highland Terriers, hunting, fishing and more fishing. He was a member of the West Shore Carvers Association and the Mechanicsburg Sportsmen's Association.

Joining the U.S. Navy in 1937, he served more than 30 years, retiring in 1968 as a chief warrant officer (CWO4). "Gunner" Allard's service spanned WWII, the Korean War and Vietnam. He served aboard the USS Cunningham (DD-371) during the attack on Pearl Harbor, submarine chaser SC-531, USS Chara (AKA-58), USS Great Sitkin (AE-17), USS Grand Canyon (AD-28), USS Pyro (AE-24) and USS Nitro (AE-23) during his career.

Wes was married to the late Alta Holley Allard for more than 58 years and is survived by his stepdaughter, Mary Claudette Geddie Spiker and her husband, Ronald E. Spiker, of Parkersburg, WV; sons Joseph Michael Allard and his wife, Margaret M. Allard, Captain, NC, USN (Ret), of Green Cove Springs, FL and Patrick Allard and his wife, Sandra A. Allard, of Camp Hill, PA; grandchildren, Robert E. Spiker, Jr. of Allen, TX, Anthony P. Shanaman and Ashley J. Allard, both of Camp Hill, PA; great grandchildren, Stuart Allen Spiker, HM3, USN, Great Lakes, IL, Holly Marie Spiker and Audry Lunne Spiker of Allen, TX.

Editor's note: Wes Allard was memorialized in an earlier edition and at the association reunion. Ed Stone obtained this information from Wes's son, Joe.

Port Chicago — Then and Now

By Jasper Strunk

A brief history of the Concord Naval Weapons Station and Port Chicago, former home port of both the USS PYRO AE 1 and 24.

All will remember the town of Port Chicago, especially The Famous Bank Club & Hotel Bar. Few ventured West on Port Chi-



Author Jasper and Lavonne Strunk raise a toast to Port Chicago — then and now.

Highway To Shore Acres and the Corner Club in West Pittsburg (now renamed, Bay Point). I'm sure that some even ventured East on Port Chicago Highway to Concord, or South on the River Road to Martinez or across the bridge to Benica and Vallejo.

In the mid-to-late 70's, the Navy and Contra Costa county had problems over whom was responsible for repair & maintenance of the Port Chicago Highway. Also the Vietnam protesters were out in force by this time. One fool even thought his body would stop a train and he lost both legs for his effort. This and other things led to the closing of Port Chicago

Highway and the River Road. The Navy purchased and demolished the city of Port Chicago in the late 1970's. The only thing left of the city was the grade school and the Coast Guard Station. The school was used as a meeting place and operations facility during ships loading and unloading operations.

Then in the early 80's the Navy built a high security facility south of port Chicago highway. This reduced the need to move trains across the highway at the main gate and reduced the demonstrator activity at the main gate area. Along with the high security area, the Navy built eight bunkers where the city of Port Chicago used to be. This facilitated the final destruction of the city with the demolition of the school and the Coast Guard Station.

Things were changing and everything was shipped by truck, train and ship in containers. The new bunkers were used for short storage and transfer of containerized material. The railroad tracks had been extended to the bunkers and containers were transferred from truck to rail or rail to truck at these bunker facilities.

Then along came the 90's and base closures hit the Bay Area. All of the bases in the Bay Area were hit by the base closure; Mare Island was the first, then came Alameda Naval Air Station, Naval Supply Center, Oak Knoll Hospital, Alameda Martinez Supply Annex, Presidio San Francisco, Treasure Island, Oakland Army Base. Every thing

in the Bay area was affected. Concord Naval Weapons Station was downsized and the 834th Army Transportation Battalion from the closed Oakland Army Base took over The Concord Weapons Station. The Army had two (2) container cranes built on



The Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial honors the memory of those who gave their lives and were injured in the explosion on 17 July 1944 and recognizes all who served at the magazine.

pier number 3. This allowed the Army to load and unload ships to and from trucks and trains.

In 2001 the Navy was gone from Concord Weapons Station and it became an Army Transportation Facility.

All maintenance of the facilities was contracted out to a civilian contractor. In 2005 the Government decided to close all of the Concord Naval Weapons, East of Highway 4 and the Army will own and operate all the Port Chicago area and pier facilities.

USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

USS PYRO ASSOCIATION
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Covington, KY 41011

Email:
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Membership Application

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Telephone: _____

Spouse's Name: _____ E-mail address: _____

Rate/rank(s) aboard Pyro: _____ Highest USN rate/rank: _____

Dates aboard USS PYRO (AE1 or AE 24) _____ to _____ Retired USN?

Separated under honorable conditions? Yes ___ No ___

To join: Send this completed application and a check payable to the USS PYRO Association for either annual dues or the lifetime membership amount appropriate for your age to:

Tom Sanborn, Treasurer
USS PYRO Association
114 Long Point Drive
Saint Simons Island, GA 31522

Association dues

Annual:	\$ 20
Lifetime membership	
Age 50 or under	\$250
51 ~ 55	\$200
56 ~ 60	\$175
61 ~ 65	\$150
66 ~ 70	\$125
71 ~ 75	\$100
76 ~81	\$ 50
82 PLUS	\$ 25