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**Reunion 2010**

**Plan now to attend the  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN  
HIGH**

**"You must respect my  
authoritah!"**

**SO BE THERE!**



**COLORADO SPRINGS, CO**

**WORLD ARENA HOTEL**

- **Great hotel — \$100 rooms.**
- **Air Force Academy memorial service**
- **Cripple Creek /Garden of the Gods tours.**



# USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

**Good things are worth the wait!**

## Join 2010 Rocky Mountain High reunion fun

It's still technically Fall and this *Scuttlebutt* is finally off the presses with all the details of the USS Pyro Association 2010 reunion at the Doubletree Hotel **May 12-16, 2010** in Colorado Springs, CO.

Though delayed by tough negotiations honchoed by the Jaegers and Treasurer Tom Sanborn, the result is a great hotel, great tours and great rates in a super location.



Memorial services for departed shipmates are both a solemn duty and a highlight of reunions. For 2010, the ceremony will be a particularly memorable one given its venue: The beautiful chapel at the U.S. Air Forces Academy pictured below.

And there's no underestimating the charms of the Colorado Springs area as a site for a great vacation: The natural beauty of Pike's Peak and the Garden of the Gods; historic Cripple Creek with gaming and shopping; fashionable restaurants; roomy, full-amenity hotel rooms that come in for about \$100 a night including taxes. All this plus an anticipated turnout of reunion regulars and new faces should make the 2010 gathering a reunion and a vacation to remember. Please see pages six and seven for the 'nuts and bolts' of planning your trip, getting there, signing up and learning more about tailoring the Colorado experience to your special interests. There's no time like the present to start the ball rolling! See you in Colorado Springs May 12-16, 2010!

## Happy ending for PYRO plank owners

While at the reunion in Reno, NV. some of us plank owners (Larry Buggeln, Bill Peregrin, Ron Kynaston and Al Hansen) were sitting around at a table reminiscing about our days on the PYRO. We were bitching about not receiving information when PYRO was decommissioned. (Editors note: Reports of AE-24's sinking seem to be premature: Gunner Bob Smith reports "Ole AE-24 is sitting in a nest of old rust buckets in the Suisun Mothball Fleet, but not near as rusty as the ones around her.") Ron brought up the fact the we never got a— [continued next page](#)



**Jasper Strunk with plank owners Al Hansen, Larry Buggeln and Ron Kynaston.**

# Pyro people

## Ruttenburg promoted to commander commended for Iraq service

Deborah Ruttenberg, who served on AE-24 as navigator from 1989-1993, was promoted to commander in the reserves and commended for service in Iraq at a wetting-down aboard her house boat at the Washington D.C. Marina in July.



Deb spent the better part of 2009 in Iraq where she tracked terrorists for NCIS and earned a Navy commendation for her performance (No she doesn't know Jethro Gibbs, but some of her colleagues from Iraq who attended the ceremony looked far tougher than DiNozzo or even Ziva!) .

Active duty was somewhat of a busman's holiday for now- Cdr. Ruttenberg: In civilian life she works for the U.S. Department of Energy, where — you guessed it — she tracks terrorists.

Naval service is nothing new to the Ruttenberg family: Her grandfather was a Naval officer during World War II and for many years her father was an official at Naval Sea Systems Command, the folks who build the ships for sailors to sail.

## Good news from Gary Michael

I went to the doctor in Seattle the other day and I got a good report. He said that since we got the cancer before it spread to the lymph nodes, there is 75 percent chance that I won't have any problems with the cancer coming back. I have to go back and be checked every three months for a while. That's as good a report as good you can get. He said that it's not very often he gets to give this good of news.

It's looking like we can resume our plans of spending a couple of months in Mexico this winter. Tough duty!!!!!!!



*Gary*

## Plank owners — continued from Page 1

piece of the PYRO and now we heard that she was sunk as an artificial reef. Now I wonder what the fish think of OSCAR the octopus down on the ocean floor? About this time Jasper Strunk was sitting at the table with us and told us that he had taken



(R) Leadsman's Frame or Helmsman Platform;  
(L) Finished pieces with plaques.

some things off of PYRO when he worked at the Naval Weapons Depot in Concord, CA..

About a month went by and Jasper sent Larry Buggeln a box full of wooden parts.

What was it? Larry wrote, "I got the plank wood from Jasper. It is about 30" square. Also it is a bunch of wood pieces, cut and notched, fit together. It took me a while to put the puzzle together. I have not decided how to do it yet, but it will be great. It came with a dog tag that say's 'Leadsman's Wood Frame Starboard'. It has some real heavy coats of varnish on it. I have taken some pictures of it assembled and will send when downloaded to the computer. I want to do something real neat with this. Jasper said it was on the bridge of the PYRO".

Larry and I discussed, through e-mails and telephone calls, what would be the best way to chunk up the platform. I told him that I would be happy with a 2-inch piece knowing that it came from the ship. Finally Larry told me that he had decided how he would cut up the wooden pieces. He started at the outside corner and cut pieces seven inches long. Then he had aluminum plaques made up engraved with our name and rate and years served aboard the USS PYRO. So far, 10 plank owners have received their piece of the PYRO.

There are still some pieces of the wooden platform available. If you are a plank owner and want a plank, contact Larry Buggeln at (951) 487-1178 or write him an E-MAIL at [JOSHJAX004@AOL.COM](mailto:JOSHJAX004@AOL.COM) . A big 'THANK YOU' to Larry and Jasper for all your time and work contributed to this special project.

*Little Willie Peregrin*



**“Our association is changing with these times — sometimes happily and sometimes kicking and screaming.”**

## From the president’s desk

By Jared Cameron

Our association is changing with the times — sometimes happily and sometimes kicking and screaming. Some of the changes like the electronic edition of the *Scuttlebutt* provide maximum service to members while keeping dues as low as possible. Other like the proposed change in the way we select reunion sites discussed below are meant to give members more say in the way the association is run. Read on:

**Reunion site selection.** Setting up a reunion is a lot more complicated than it used to be. Getting together with old shipmates is still the major reunion objective, but Pyro-maniacs want reunions that double as vacations, are affordable, and held at interesting sites around the country. Sometimes, putting together a plan that hits all three of those requirements is easier said than done.

In the early days, reunions were usually held in the president’s hometown. Then we ‘ran out’ of hometowns. Lately, we’ve asking members about the next site at the membership meeting and conducting a ‘straw poll’ to rank favorites. Then, volunteers check out the preferred sites, get prices and report back. Trouble is, sites that members prefer may be neither available nor affordable.

For 2010, we were very lucky to have Gary and Ruby Jaeger make great arrangements in their hometown, Colorado Springs. But other sites we looked into just didn’t work. For example, in perennial straw poll favorite Seattle, you just can’t find a hotel room — group rate or no — that doesn’t cost an arm and a leg.

So after all the sites are surveyed and the beans are counted, the executive committee picks a city and a hotel that works. And, well, you can’t please all the people all the time.

For 2010, we’ll try a new timetable. Between now and the 2010 gathering, we’ll ask all members to propose sites. **Before** the next reunion, we’ll research suggested venues, giving preference to the Midwest and East per our rotation schedule, then present the doable sites to the members to make a choice on the basis of facts, prices and specific hotels.

**Next steps:** If you have an idea either for a location or a specific hotel, let Secretary Doug Wisher know. If you have specifics, fine, but if you don’t, the *ad hoc* reunion committee will check each out. Then at the 2010 gathering, members will get to choose the 2011 site based on specific facts and figures, not ‘what ifs.’

**Dues due.** Dues for 2010 are due January 1. The association needs those dues to mail out the *Scuttlebutt*, make reunion deposits and for a host of other activities. Hardworking Treasurer Tom Sanborn has already sent out reminder postcards, but if 2010 is like most years, dues will dribble in for months.

One reason some folks put off paying their dues is that they think it’s a big pain to sit down, write a check, address an envelope, find a stamp and mail the lucre off.

With the idea that folks might like a little convenience, we’re trying a test: A PayPal button for paying dues by credit card will be available on the Pyro website soon. Anyone with a credit card — whether you’re a PayPal member or not — can click on the button and pony up their dues by filling in a simple form. No check, no envelope, no stamp.

It’s an experiment. President Cameron thinks a bunch of you will like this system and — if it works out — we might even move on to accepting credit cards for reunion activities. Treasurer Sanborn thinks everyone is happy doing things the old fashioned way. Who’s right? Only time will tell.

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### USS PYRO ASSOCIATION

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Jasper Strunk

*Historian*

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Gary Golay

Jasper Strunk

# Pyro memories

*Editor's note: How many time have you said, "I wish I could remember more details about my time on the Pyro?" Shipmate Bill Peregrin foresaw that and keep a journal of his Pyro days. We can't print it all in one edition due to space limitations, but here's installment one.*

## **WILLIAM PEREGRIN'S JOURNAL**

**Memories of PYRO from letters sent home, talking with other shipmates and mostly entries from my log book May 1959 to January 1961.**

13 MAY – On the USS LSM-373. The Chief of the engineering department called me into the office and told me that orders for (3) Fireman from the ship would be assigned to a new ammunition ship PYRO. No other information at this time. Ronald Moser, William Shoenecker and another shipmate nicknamed Ziggy received orders to be transferred. I was to replace Ziggy, because he was needed on the ship. And I get seasick a lot and I wanted to be a Machinery Repairman (MR) striker.

15 MAY - Took 72 hrs. Liberty to come home. Had something special planned. Took my girl friend to Philadelphia and saw the re-released 1939 film "Gone With the Wind".

18 MAY – Reported back to the 373 for the last time. Received orders for PYRO.

20 MAY – Reported to the PYRO PRE-COM School at Norfolk Naval Base.

1 JUN through 30 JUN Pre-Com school with classes in Ship's Nomenclature, Damage Control, Fire Fighting, Handy Billy pump disassembly and reassembly, etc. The Chief instructor said if any body gets a 4.0 on test score, they would get a free beer at his bar outside the main gate. I got the 4.0 but no beer, too young — had to be 21 years old.

10 JUL – All third class petty officers and below reported aboard U.S.S. PYRO AE-24. Tom Gabos and I were standing on the first ladder platform looking down at the engine room. When all of a sudden the compartment hatch opened and this guy shouts at us: "What are you F\*\*\*ING PUKES doing down there?". I thought for a minute that he was a BM2 class, but he turned out to be Jim Thurman MM2. Senior Chief Machinist's Mate Manske had us trace all of the steam lines, water lines, airconditioner, compressed air lines and anything that didn't move. We did these and other things for about a month.

24 JUL – Commissioned PYRO, Capt. Robert A. Paton took command of the ship and set the first watch. My mother, Ethel, was sent an invitation and a pass to come on the Naval Base. She accepted

and attended the Commissioning Ceremonies.

In a conversation in 2008, Jim Thurman told me that it was so hot up on the deck that the wax in our shoe polish melted during the ceremony.

27 JUL – PYRO moved to the Degaussing Station on the Elizabeth River to be demagnetized. The Station was my first duty assignment after Boot Camp. I received permission to visit with some of my old station mates and had a good time.

28 JUL – Routine normal still learning how to operate the Engine Room. PYRO moved to Portsmouth Ship Yard.

1 AUG – (Recalled in an E-MAIL to Tom Sanborn on 13 AUG 2008) I have a story (for, four, 4,4,4,) you.

What is blue dycum?

While the Pyro was at Portsmouth Ship Yard August 1959 a yard bird (civilian) from BuShips named Chet came aboard with his leather satchel and 4 foot breaker bar. Chief Manske assigned me to be his helper. We would unbolt the bearing caps on the main steam turbine, then wipe off the oil on the bearing and apply the blueing. I seem to remember that Chet called it Blue Dycum. "high quality, good luster and fluid, not like Prussian blue paste." With the caps back on we would spin the turbine, take off the caps and Chet would take off the high spots on the bearing Babbitt with his Shetland steel scrapers from England. We would do this over and over again until he was satisfied that the bearing surface was uniform without any high spots. I have never used or heard of this type of blueing until I read an article by Tom Sanborn.

27 AUG – Departed Norfolk VA.

28 AUG – Arrived at Naval Ammunition Depot Earle, NJ. Started loading ammunition. The pier at Earle stretches 2 miles into the Sandy Hook Bay.

19 SEP - Capt. Marshall U. Beebe took command of PYRO. Capt. Paton was the ship's Skipper for only 58 days.

21 SEP – Finish loading ammo and loaded some cars & trucks to take to the west coast.

22 SEP – Departed from Earle NJ.

26 SEP – Saturday arrived at Guantanamo Bay Cuba; SHAKEDOWN cruise begins.

28 SEP- or OCT. Tom Gabos Hazleton, PA.; Mark Grimmer Kenmore, NY; Larry Buggeln, Torrance, CA; and William Peregrin, Langhorne, PA; Had picture taken at the E.M. club drinking San Magill or



***More on next page***

# Pyro memories

*Match the sailor with the civilian — one from column a, one from column b*

*Then*

*and*

*now*



**Tom Sanborn, Bill Delaney, Bill Peregrin, Bob Smiley, Kirk Keeler, John Wichtrich, Larry Buggeln, Art Derry, Larry Shepline, Lon Frye, Charlie Batten are each pictured once on the left and once on the right. Who's who? Answers in next Scuttlebutt. (In the unlikely event you'd like your 'then and now' photos included in future editions, send photos to the editor.)**

Hatuey (one eye Indian) beer.

3 OCT – Bought a .22 cal pistol at the Naval Exchange and when I had time off I would go to the range and shoot. I made friends with a LCDR nurse who also liked to shoot and she gave me some pointers on pistol shooting.

While at Cuba, there was no liberty off of the base, no tours to Havana. But we could go horseback riding on the back of the Naval base. One time Bob Parrott, Larry Buggeln and myself went to go riding. Parrott took his quirt (a riding whip) and gave Buggeln's horse a good shot on its flank, the damn horse took off and didn't stop running until it reached the back fence. Buggeln got off and walked all the way back to the stable.

5 OCT – While on a Shakedown exercise, I happened to be on the throttle watch at

MainControl. I was told to put on the head set and wait for verbal orders. As we approached a measured distance range, the bridge gave the command to full speed and then to open the throttle valve to full open, the main shaft R.P.M. went up & up until the RPM indicator showed 107 turns.

At this point, all of the boilers injection nozzles were lit off to make enough high temperature steam to keep up with the main turbine. The engine room got so hot that the sweat was running down our faces into our eyes.

At a certain spot on the range, I received orders to back down to full reverse and stop the ship. I thought that the ship would shake itself apart. Some of the Machinist Mates were pissed off that a Machinery Repairman striker had top RPM'S on the main shaft. ***More in the next Scuttlebutt***

## Colorado Springs — Area Briefing

Colorado Springs, Colorado, is home to more than 50 exciting and unique attractions such as Pikes Peak, U.S. Olympic Training Center, Garden of the Gods Park, The Cog Railway, Royal Gorge Bridge, Cave of the Winds, Manitou Cliff Dwellings, Seven Falls, Flying W Ranch and the U.S. Air Force Academy.



With over 300 days of sunshine each year, outdoor recreation opportunities are everywhere you look. We have extensive parks and open spaces with trails that wind through magnificent rock formations and shady mountain forests – perfect for

hiking, biking and horseback riding. Or tackle the rapids of the Arkansas on a river rafting tour that winds through the Royal Gorge. Try something different such as a guided bike ride down Pikes Peak or a hot air balloon ride up into the Colorado sky. Fishing, camping, golfing and rock climbing are also favorites in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak region.

Colorado Springs is also known for its rich and diverse cultural activities. Learn about how the city was founded and how the Pikes Peak or Bust gold rush shaped our region at the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum and Pikes Peak Heritage Center. Descend 1,000 feet into a gold mine or take an historic train ride in Cripple Creek or the Royal Gorge. Visit historic homes such as Glen Eyrie Castle, Miramont Castle and Briarhurst Manor. View classic and modern art at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and Smokebrush Gallery or explore your passion and interests at the Money Museum, Outlaws & Lawmen Museum, Western Museum of Mining & Industry, Rock Ledge Historic Ranch, Rocky Mountain Motorcycle Museum or the Rocky Mountain



Dinosaur Resource Center.

These attractions, activities and historic locations plus the reunion constants — memories of our Naval service and good Pyro people — all await you in Colorado Springs, Colorado!



### Our reunion hotel



The Doubletree Hotel Colorado Springs by the World Arena, just off I-25, offers scenic Colorado Rocky Mountain views of Pikes Peak and Cheyenne Mountain, ten minutes from *Colorado Springs Airport*. Enjoy our hotel amenities for your business or leisure travel.

A friendly and courteous staff, warm ambiance, high-speed Internet access and convenient location are only a few reasons to plan your next stay with us. Enjoy a convenient, casual breakfast, lunch or dinner in our hotel restaurant, Atrium Café. Nearby, the World Arena is just three blocks away, and we're located within walking distance of restaurants, shops and a 20-screen theater.



Our spacious lobby, business center, two lounges, heated indoor pool, inviting exterior courtyard, fitness center and well-appointed (interior corridor) guest rooms complete the perfect setting for your Rocky Mountain getaway. Free shuttle from Airport.

### USS Pyro 2010 Reunion Checklist

- Tell those children, grandchildren and doctors 'NO! to weddings/graduations/surgeries during the reunion period.
- Make your reservations at the Doubletree World Arena Hotel. Be sure to ask for the USS PYRO reunion rate. (If you're a smoker, request a room with a balcony, a request the hotel promises to honor. When: Now would be a good time! Reunion rates: \$90 + tax Direct Tel: **719-576-8900**)
- Use the form on the next page to sign up for the great reunion activities. When? The deadline is early Spring, but the sooner, the better.
- Make arrangements to get to Colorado Springs. If you're travelling by air, flying to Denver can save money, but you'll need to rent a car and leave time after the reunion for the 100 mile drive to the airport. If you're driving from home, the hotel offers free parking.

To learn more:

<http://www.visitcos.com>

Or Google

[Doubletree Hotel Colorado Springs](#)

**USS PYRO ASSOCIATION**  
**2010 Reunion: *ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH***  
May 12-16, 2010  
**THE DOUBLETREE WORLD ARENA HOTEL, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO**  
**REGISTRATION WORKSHEET**

Name

Spouse/Guest

Address

City State ZIP

TEL: E-mail

**REUNION OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Wednesday 12 May 2010**

**6:00 PM Welcome Aboard Reception.** Arrive in Colorado Springs at your leisure. Log in and get reacquainted with old (and young) shipmates in the hospitality room. **Reunion registration, reception and Hospitality Room membership with unlimited adult refreshments included throughout the reunion.**

**Registration and Hospitality Room: \$20.00 per Person**

Number of Persons @ \$20 Total \$

- Remainder of the evening free to explore Colorado Springs attractions, shopping and entertainment

**Thursday 13 May 2010**

• **9:00 am ~ 3:00 pm AIR FORCE ACADEMY & GARDEN OF THE GODS TOUR/Memorial Service** Enjoy a relaxed, hassle-free tour to the 18,000-acre Air Force Academy. After we pass through the North Gate, you will view Diamond Lil, the B-52 Bomber. Next - a lovely scenic overlook off North Gate Road. You're in for a treat in visiting the exquisite 17-spired, interdenominational chapel where we will remember departed shipmates at a Memorial Service. Afterwards, you travel to the Garden of the Gods Park, the most photographed site in the United States and one of the world's greatest natural wonders. Fantastic formations jut skyward at heights of over 300 feet. Several stops will be made to view such spectacular monoliths as Balanced Rock and the Kissing Camels. Includes Transportation, Tour Guide, and lunch at AFA/Academy Club. (Minimum 20 participants.)

- Remainder of the day free to explore Colorado Springs attractions, shopping and entertainment.

**Academy and Garden of Gods Tour \$55.00 person**

Number of Persons @ \$55 Total \$

**Friday 14 May 2010**

• 9:00 AM ~ 3:00 PM **GAMBLING FOR THE GOLD.** Here's a tour that will take you back in time to the event that put the Pikes Peak region on the map, when cowpoke Bob Womack struck pay dirt 100 years ago. The cry "GOLD" reverberated around the world, and "Pikes Peak or Bust" was the rallying response of thousands that poured into the West in search of quick wealth. By 1900, Cripple Creek had a population of 55,000. Today it has dwindled to less than 4,000 but bustles again with excitement as a new gaming center. (minimum 30 participants) Includes Transportation / \$10.00 cash coupon / \$5.00 coupon for cash or meal.

**Gambling for the Gold Tour \$38.00 per person**

Number of Persons @ \$38 Total \$

- Remainder of the day free to explore Colorado Springs attractions, shopping and entertainment.

**Saturday 15 May 2010**

- 10:00 AM Association business meeting
- 11:00 Noon ~ 6:00 PM Free to explore Colorado Springs attractions, shopping and entertainment.
- 6:00 – 6:30 PM Group/individual photos; cocktails [Cash Bar],
- 7:00 **Awards Banquet:** Entrée choices: Sliced Sirloin, Chicken Cordon Bleu, Sole Vera Cruz, Vegetable Wellington

- 7:30 - 12:00 PM **Dancing,**

**Awards Banquet \$45 per person**

Number of Persons @ \$45 Total \$

**Total** Amount of enclosed check payable to USS Pyro Association \$

**Sunday 16 May 2010**

Saddle up Old Paint and head home or stay on for a few extra days at special reunion rates.

**To register: Mail this form with appropriate payment to:**

**Tom Sanborn, Treasurer, 114 Long Point Drive, St. Simons Island, GA 31522**

USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

USS PYRO ASSOCIATION  
Douglas Wisher, secretary  
1022 Winding Way  
Covington, KY 41011

Email:  
wisherdj@fuse.net



\*\*\* THE PRIDE AND TRADITION FOREVER \*\*\*

We're on the Web  
www.usspyro.com



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

## USS PYRO AE-1 & AE-24 ASSOCIATION

### 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**