



Spring 2006

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

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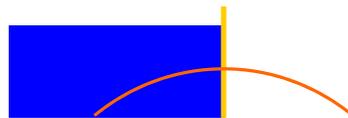
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**Reunion 2007**  
Join your shipmates  
*on dry land*  
in  
**Philadelphia!**  
  
**Details on page 3**



# USS PYRO Scuttlebutt



## Fellowship, food and fun!

## Pyro people sail away on a reunion at sea

In a cross between sailors gone wild on Spring Break and *The Loveboat*, some 40 AE-1 and AE-24 salts, significant others and friends went to their stations with the special sea and anchor detail March 30 as the *MS Celebration* set out from Jacksonville for a four-night cruise to the Bahamas.

Reunions are all about sharing sea stories with old shipmates, building friendships with Pyro people we didn't previously know and sailors' spouses recounting tales of good hearted women in love with – apologies to Willie Nelson -- good timin' tars.

As is the case at all Pyro reunions, the gathering had a serious side: The reading of the list of the deceased at the association business meeting and a moving memorial service for fallen comrades on the weather deck that included roses spread on the sea in tribute and the singing of *America The Beautiful*

This one had all that, along with sit-down fine dining, dinners with unlimited seconds, mess-decks open 24 hours a day, Las Vegas style floor shows, nightly dancing, gambling at sea, duty-free shopping, two swimming pools, a half dozen bars, beauty parlor, health spa, and mini-gym. Plus a complimentary Pyro 'welcome aboard' cocktail party, daytime hospitality room, free wine with

dinner on several nights, a \$35 per cabin credit for shipboard purchases and copious glasses raised to shipmates who missed movement.

For those willing to forego nightly bingo tournaments amidships, bikini ogling at the forward pool, the hairy chest contest

in the aft pool, karaoke in the music lounge and salsa dancing lessons on the promenade deck, the Pyro reunion at sea left plenty of time for sharing quality time with spouses, the elusive search for bargains in Nassau or Freeport, walking along a sandy Bahamian beach, relaxing with a good book in the ship's library or checking out conch fritters and Bahamian rum, or simply catching up on shut-eye missed due to the obligations of the workaday world and the rigors of retirement.

"Let's do this *every* year," was the enthusiastic – if, alas, impractical – suggestion made by several participants, both veteran fun ship addicts and first-time civilian cruisers. (See pages 4-7 for reunion photos

### Chief Quartermasters gone wild!!



Rick Tully (AE-24 ~ 1962-66) celebrates aboard the Celebration on the USS Pyro Association's 2006 reunion.



**Uneasy rests the head that wears the crown... or the tiara in this case.**

#### **Officers**

*President*

**Jared Cameron**

*Vice President*

**Billy L. Eckstine**

*Secretary*

**Douglas Wisher**

*Treasurer*

**Tom Sanborn**

#### **Appointed Officers**

*Scuttlebutt Editor*

**Jared Cameron**

*Chaplain*

**'Vance' Worrell**

*MAA*

**Jasper Strunk**

*Historian*

**Tony Sieverin**

*Nominating  
Committee*

**Gary Golay  
Jasper Strunk**

## **From The president's desk**

**By Jared Cameron**

### **Uneasy rests the head..**

#### **that wears the crown – or tiara in this case!**

Though on the Pyro I never reached heady leadership levels, I did have the opportunity to watch chiefs and officers at work enough to conclude that taking credit for others efforts – and blame for subordinate's errors – is an essential element of command. With that in mind, I want to claim all the credit for a super reunion at sea. Wow, I'm really hot stuff!

Bob Hauge tells me that in the early years of the association, arranging reunions down to the last detail was the main duty of the president.

Lucky for me, this isn't the 'Old' Pyro Association.' Thanks to the good works of Tom Sanborn, travel Agent Torrey Adams and the Carnival Cruise Lines, I barely lifted a finger and everyone who sailed with us had, I believe, a great time. (Some folks are already talking about their next voyage.) We all owe our gratitude to all three, especially to Tom, who undertook the job for love, not money. Also, thanks to all who helped organize this outstanding event and even greater thanks to every participant!

The only thing made this reunion less-than-perfect was a lower than usual turnout. The cruise seemed like a great bargain to those aboard the Celebration, but part of the turnout gap could be attributed to the cost. Some folks just didn't want to go back to sea, some found Florida geographically undesirable. Carnival's 10-months-in-advance reservation policy might have also been a contributing factor as was a spate of bad publicity that fell on the entire cruise industry.

By choosing Philadelphia for the 2007 reunion and a West Coast site for 2008, the association is addressing all those issues and will make is possible for several shipmates we haven't seen for a while — or ever if preliminary statements of intentions to attend hold true — to make the reunion.

So what's with the goofy photo and the somewhat odd headline? Well, now with the successful reunion under our belts (in more way than one!) your association president/Scuttlebutt editor face a period fraught with peril.

This newsletter edition carries many photos of the reunion, a good thing. But selection and captioning of those photos is a dangerous business – especially risky is the potential for misidentifying shipmates and 'marrying' shipmate A's spouse to shipmate B.

Also, the Scuttlebutt's size is limited by both printing and electronic distribution file size limitations. So, while a photo of every participant is included, we had to work with the photos currently in hand. But despair not: More photos are on the way and everyone's reunion shots are solicited. They'll all — especially the embarrassing ones — will be part of the Second Annual free electronic memory book packed with more and higher resolution photos of the nautical fun — that will be mailed on disk for you to view on your computer or print out at a copy store to each reunion participate and any Pyro vet who requests one.

As for any as for wife-swapping by caption, well, the buck stops here: If any are in this Scuttlebutt, it's Larry Shepline's, Susan Scanlan's, Bob Hauge's or someone else's fault. It can't be mine. I have the tiara on...

# Philadelphia selected as 2007 Pyro Association reunion site

The USS Pyro Association's standing committee unanimously named Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the site of the group's 2006 reunion in the wake of a multi-tiered selection process.

Larry Shepline, well known for his thoughtful, painstaking work as disbursing officer on AE-24 from 1963~1965, service as association vice president in 2003~4, and as a thoroughly thorough proof 'editor'/guardian of good taste for this publication, will serve as reunion chairman.



A number of reunion sites were discussed at the membership meeting. After extensive weighing of the pros and cons of various venues, members directed the standing committee to select either Philadelphia or a West Coast location as the 2007 site.

Had there been any reasonable chance of the AE-24's remaining in the Concord/Port Chicago area for another year, members expressed a preference for a gathering at AE-24's old stomping grounds.

Subsequently, information from Jasper Strunk and others indicated that the AE-24 will not likely last the summer before being towed to sea for target practice. And Jasper's post reunion trip to Concord determined that security concerns have for all practical purposes rendered local military facilities inaccessible. Based on this



**Independence Hall, home of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.**

information, The City of Brotherly Love was picked for 2007 and a West Coast site will be moved to the front burner for 2008.

Philadelphia, in addition to being the site of a rich variety of historical sites and hosting some great ethnic and seafood dining, had become the front-runner because of its location, which is accessible to a number of members who have been unable to attend recent reunions. It's also a party town and home of shipmate Bill Burgert, who promises to play his clarinet for shipmates as he did on the AE-1 in the Pacific.

## Schwendeman



### to wed in July

Martin E. 'Dutch' Schwendeman, a RM1 who served on AE-24 from 1964~66, will marry Pat Drury in July.

The bride-to-be is a nurse who currently resides in Alexandria, Virginia, which will be the site of the summer nuptials.

Dutch lives in Montrose, Virginia.

The groom-to-be's advice for finding a beautiful bride?

"Get a boat!"

Dutch, who still goes down to the sea — or at least the Potomac river — in ships owns a boat that required significant repairs.

After several months of ongoing repairs that led to a friendship, the boatyard owner inquired if Dutch would like to meet 'a nice girl' — his mother, Pat Drury.

The rest — as they say — is history.



**Put your happy event here!**

**Whether it's a wedding or the birth of a new child or grandchild, how better to share the happy news than with a photo and story in The Scuttlebutt? Pass the word on to the editor at [scuttlebutt@comcast.net](mailto:scuttlebutt@comcast.net)**

# USS Pyro reunion day-by-day

## Navy ammo ships...

### Abandon ship drill

Thursday, March 30  
5~6 PM  
Pyro Cocktail Party  
6: 15 PM  
Dinner

Friday, March 31  
Day at sea  
8~9:30am

Business Meeting  
in the  
Hospitality Lounge

5: 15pm  
Group photo  
6: 15pm  
Dinner  
7: 1 5pm

Captain's cocktail party

Saturday, April 1  
7 am

Arrive Nassau, Bahamas  
8 am~4pm

Hospitality room open-  
6: 15pm  
Dinner

Sunday, April 2  
Arrive Freeport, Baha-  
mas

"Hospitality room open  
5 :45pm

Memorial service  
6:15 PM  
Dinner

Monday, April 3  
Arrive Jacksonville



Nearer my God to thee...Chaplain Worrell escorts wife Bev and Myra Eckstine to their lifeboat station.



Will the *rea*/Mae West please stand up? Lavonne and Jasper Strunk test their life jackets.

### Welcome aboard reception



Handsome Hansens...Al and Shirley Hansen enjoy nautical togetherness.



Who dat? Lud Miller, Scot Hinrichs and Sandra Hinrichs check out the crowd at the Welcome Aboard cocktail party.



Executive privilege...Tom Sanborn looks askance as Jared Cameron greets Carol Verret.



It's mostly juice...Gary Golay, Helen Golay and Rita Tully sample the Celebration's tropical drinks.

# were never like this! Will there be any stars in my crown?



**My Tom shared a ward room with these guys?**  
Carol Moulton (C) retains her aplomb as John Wichtrich (L) and Larry Sheiplin (R) try out tiaras.



REAR: (L-R) Bev Worrell, Susan Scanlan, Carol Moulton, Linda Lewis, Sharon Hamlin and Linda Fox are 'queen for a day.'  
FRONT: G.W. Lewis and Randy Bell don their tiaras as Jimmy Bell wonders exactly what kind of a Navy group he's dining with. (The Lewises and Bells are friends of Bill Hogan who sailed with the Pyro group.)



**Can we get another round here?** Doug Wisher and Gary Golay join in dining room festivities...



## Star of the Show

Behind every successful event, there's a star, a work horse — not a show horse — who takes the time to handle the nitty-gritty details. In a organization like the USS Pyro Association that is staffed by volunteers, the reunion chairman carries a big load.



Tom Sanborn, while also serving as our association's treasurer — no small job in itself — has served on the past three reunion committees, chairing the Branson gathering in 2005 and the Carnival Celebration reunion this year.

Working with a travel agent, Tom was able to negotiate among other perks, cabin upgrades for association members; a daytime hospitality room on-board; a \$35 per cabin credit; complimentary wine at selected dinners; and a cruise fare far lower than 'walk-up rate' individual passengers pay. Bravo Zulu, Tom!



# Dinner(s) for the crew

Now muster on the mess deck...



*The some of us erstwhile sailors never quite figured out the whys and wherefores of the Pyro's travels hither and yon, the rationale behind pleasure cruises is arguably less of a mystery. In three words, food, food and food. Cocktail hours and meals are both an art and ends in themselves. See for yourself:*



## Rum rations



No rest for the wicked: The Scuttlebutt editor hard at word buttressed by a martini.



Carol Verret, Tom Sanborn, Tony Sieverin, Charlene Sieverin, Billy Eckstine, Lloyd Ellis, Scot Hinrichs and Sandra Hinrichs line up for grog.



John Wichrich, Carol Verret, Carol Melton, Billy Eckstine and Linda Wisner share a cup of kindness.



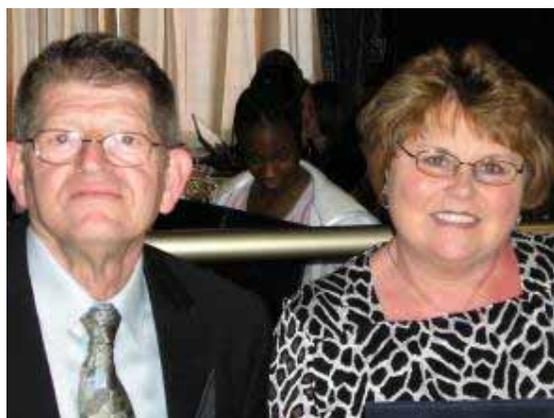
## Celebrations on *The Celebration*



Rita Tully (L) and Jasper Strunk (R) celebrate undisclosed birthdays while the staff signs. By candle count, Jasper is at least five time Rita's age...



# Table hopping



**Left column. TOP: Loyd and Mary Ellis. CENTER: Fred and Sharon Hamlin; Shirley and Al Hansen; Jasper and Lavonne Strunk; Vance and Bev Worrell. BOTTOM: Susan Scanlan; Frank Ryan; Jean Stoddard; Larry Sheipline and John Wichtrich.**

**Right column. TOP: Tom Sanborn and Carol Verret; Mary Ellis; Carlene and Tony Sieverin; and Fred and Sharon Hamlin.; CENTER: Myra and Billy Eckstine; Bill Hogan ; Linda Fox; BOTTOM: Beth and Jimmy Bell; and Tom and Carol Moulton.**

# Ceremony at sea remembers, honors fallen comrades

Usually boisterous, the sun and pool decks of the Celebration grew respectfully silent as swimmers and sun-seekers joined the USS Pryo Association to honor those who have gone before us.

Association Chaplain Vance Worrell read the names of the departed since the last reunion as Rick Tully rang a ship's bell twice in honor of each deceased shipmate. As Randy Bell sang *America the Beautiful*, AE1 vet Frank T. Ryan, Sr. and Lavonne Strunk tearfully dropped red roses filled with memories into the blue Caribbean sea.



ABOVE: Frank Ryan with Robert and Bernice Kelly. RIGHT: (L-R) Doug Wisner, Larry Sheipline, John Wichtrich and Randy Bell. BELOW: Jasper Strunk, Frank Ryan and Lavonne Strunk



**ROLL OF THE DEPARTED**  
AE-1  
 JAMES W. BROWNING  
 ROY A. WILLIAMSON  
 PAUL C. HISEL  
AE-24  
 DERRELL G. GILLESPIE  
 VINCENT RAMIREZ, JR  
SPOUSES  
 BONNIE SMITH  
 ELEANOR STONE  
 THEODORA FOX



## Gillman gang opts for 'shore duty' in Jacksonville



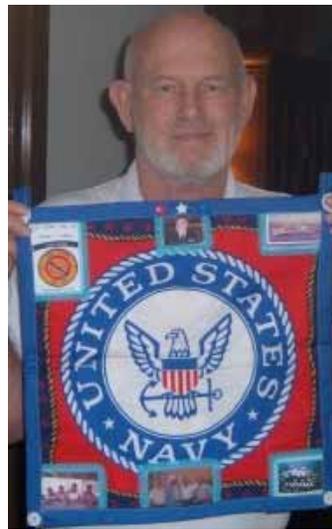
Four-day Caribbean cruises aren't everyone's cup of tea, but that doesn't mean friends and shipmates can't get together for fun and fellowship. That's exactly what a group of AE-24 with no further desire for sea duty did in Jacksonville April

3~6.

Dubbed the Scope-dope Landubber's reunion by the irreverent (guess who?), the group enjoyed superb seafood and copious refreshments along with a display of Millie Derry's notable sewing skills and a Dutch's big-as-a-bracelet wedding ring. (See story on page 3)



Left to right: Bailey George; Jared Cameron and Susan Scanlan; Betty and Ray and Gillman; Millie and Art Derry; fiancé Pat Drury and Dutch Schwendeman in the lobby of Embassy Suites Jacksonville, the site of the 2003 association gathering.



Mille and Art Derry show off Millie's handiwork, a quite made up of Navy seas and photos taken aboard AE-24 in the 1960's while Chief Gillman shows off the memory quilt made for him by Millie Derry.

## Membership meeting highlights

Pursuant to the association by-laws, President Jared Cameron convened the USS Pyro membership meeting aboard the MS Celebration at 8 am, Friday, March 31, 2006.

The official minutes of that meeting will be published in a later edition of The Scuttlebutt along with the treasurer's report.

Below are the highlights of actions taken as recalled by this publication's not-as-young-as-he-one-was editor:

- Officers: Tom Sanborn for re-election as treasurer for a two-year term.
- Audit: The audit committee reported association books are in good order.
- Reunion 2007: See story on page 3 for details.
- Money: Members discussed association expenditures and requirements for temporary outlays/ deposits.
- President presented a report card of accomplishments and a to-do list. Main to-do: Oral history.
- Rosters. After a discussion and mindful of the evils of spam, members agreed to authorized the distribution of a roster (without dues status) and electronic Scuttlebutt to any Pyro veteran who requests one.
- Liability. President to seek legal advice on potential association liabilities.

# USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

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

Email:  
wisherdj@fuse.net



**We're on the Web**  
[www.usspyro.com](http://www.usspyro.com)

Request permission  
to come onboard!



### 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 or older	\$ 25

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## USS PYRO AE-1 & AE24 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

### 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