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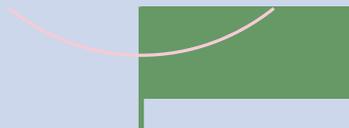
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USS PYRO Scuttlebutt



On the whole, we'd rather be in Philly!

EXCLUSIVE, SHOCKING!



Battleship sailor cruises hot PYRO babes!

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this
edition**

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On comedian W.C. Fields's headstone is inscribed: *On the whole, I'd rather be in Philadelphia.* Fields wrote those words in sarcasm, but the 50-plus USS Pyro veterans, family and friends who gathered in Philly for the 2007 reunion came away with a new affection for each other and the City of Brotherly Love.

They toured important sites from American history, remembered fallen comrades in a moving memorial service aboard the USS New Jersey, sampled colonial fare, cheese steaks and Cuban delicacies in Philly eateries, dropped dough on the Kentucky Derby, drank more-than-a-few cups of kindness for Auld Lang Syne and danced the night away, not necessarily with their own wives.

With several first-time reunion participants on hand and others returning after a long hiatus, members rekindled friendships from past reunions as well as those formed on the Pyro during days when ships were — at least figuratively — made of wood, but their crews were made of iron.

This post-reunion edition of *The Scuttlebutt* is crammed full of impressions from that reunion both in words and photos. Read on to remember the fun you had — or to learn what you missed. See *In this edition* for all the details!



Dancing the Night Away. Jane Burgert and Ed Stone cut a rug to tunes by her husband, sensational saxophonist and erstwhile AE-1 *Pyromaniac* band man Bill Burgert, accompanied by the reunion band

Association 'heroes' honored at banquet



Bob Hauge

Awards are the USS Pyro Association's way of saying 'thank you' to people who make contributions to our group that are above and beyond the call of duty.

You could say that everyone who attends reunions — even each association member and each spouse — deserves an award because everyone plays an important role in the association. And you'd be right. But exceptional service merits exceptional recognition and in 2007, six 'heroes' earned special rewards for their exceptional service. **The envelopes, please:**

Lifetime achievement awards

Robert L. Hauge in grateful recognition of his valued service as association secretary, *Scuttlebutt* editor, proofreader *par excellence*, AE-1's unofficial historian and our association's go-to guy when something needs to be done now and done right.

Robert W. Smiley, Jr., for founding and financing the USS Pyro website that bridges generations and makes certain that the USS Pyro *lives on in the hearts and minds of those who served on her*, for conceiving and executing a recruitment drive together with the late Chief Ray Gillman that brought many of us to the Association and assured its continuing viability despite the ravages of time and demographics; and for being a superb shipmate whose birthday and anniversary greetings are the bane of postmen and a blessing to his friends.

Certificates of appreciation

Larry L. Sheipline in grateful recognition of his exceptional service as 2007 'See yuh in Philly' Reunion Chairman in organizing and overseeing meticulous arrangements for a reunion to remember in a healthy, smoke-free environment.

Douglas Wisher for service above and beyond the call of duty as association Secretary despite a daunting domestic 'honey-do' list, his willingness to do what it takes to get the job done and the sincere affection he displays for each and every member of the USS Pyro family in both word and deed.

Tom Sanborn for service above and beyond the call of duty as reunion chairman for not one, but two reunions in Branson as well as at sea aboard the Carnival *Celebration* that defined the term *prolific planning* for all future association gatherings and caused one and all to believe — at least for a moment — that snipes can actually do something that doesn't involve crawling in boilers.

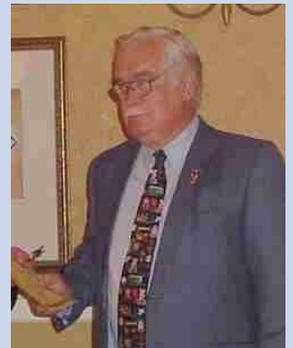
Lisa Michael for service above and beyond the call of duty in producing and distributing *The Scuttlebutt* with cheerful competence and amazing efficiency.



Doug Wisher



Bob Smiley



Tom Sanborn



Lisa Michael



Larry Sheipline



“Two ships, one crew”

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From the president's desk

By Jared Cameron

Larry Shepline did most all the work. And Tom Sanborn wrote the checks that made everything happen. Doug Wisher, Bailey George and Billy Eckstine provided many of the best photos, a few of which appear in this Scuttlebutt edition and many of which will appear in the Reunion 2007 Memory Book. Bill Burgert did torture me for several weeks about whether or not he would venture into downtown Philadelphia to play for us, but in the end he came and rocked the joint with his sax, keeping members young and old dancing far beyond all expectations and their bed times. And in a world where showing up is 85 percent of the battle, all the normal suspects showed up, had a ball and pitched in to make sure everyone else had fun, too. (I only wish there were more room for photos in this edition to show them all at work and play.) So I'm not patting myself on the back when I say Philadelphia was a great reunion, perhaps the best yet — but then again I say that every year.

Especially welcome were three first-time participants, Charlie Batten, Frank Fanning and Clyde Griffith, AE-24 warlords from the early-to-mid 1960's — all of whom, I suspect, will be back at future reunions.

Thanks in no small part to the dedicated nagging of Bob Hauge, eight AE-1 sailors joined us in Philly. Hearing their sea stories and partying with these folks is an honor, a delight and — despite their sadly decreasing numbers — one of the great experiences of a Pyro reunion.

Speaking of the AE-1, I had a great conversation with Ed Stone. One of the fathers of the association, Ed told me of the comradeship he and other AE-1 folks feel with those of us who served on AE-24. He used the words 'Two ships, one crew' to describe his feelings. This was especially gratifying since honoring AE-1 veterans was a major objective for me; the time I have spent at and between reunions with Ed, Bob Hauge, the Iversens, the MacDonalds, Bill Burgert, Ellie Fricke, Tom Ryan...the list goes on and on... ranks right up there with friendships with folks with whom I actually served.

Ed went a step further: He suggested we drop the words 'AE-1 and AE-24' from our group's name, making it simply the USS Pyro Association. I suggested we add the legend 'Two ships, one crew.'

While it will take action at a future membership meeting to make this official, I plan to take Ed's wise and generous counsel: I'll refer to the USS Pyro Association in *The Scuttlebutt* from now on and hope you will, too.

We also need to express the association's gratitude to a former Pyro sailor who was not at the reunion.

Vanessa Mera (whose name I hope I spelled correctly) served on the AE-24 in the 1990's. Now out of the Navy and living in New Mexico, Vanessa took the time to dig up a disk of the AE-24's decommissioning and to share it with all of us. The work and family are, unfortunately, likely to keep her away from reunions for a while, we all want Vanessa — and her generation — to be part of the association and to share the camaraderie that binds together all who have served on the Pyro regardless of era or hull number.



Association honors departed shipmates



The crew of the USS Pyro Association mustered on the wooden deck of the battleship USS New Jersey the afternoon of May 4, 2007 in somber reflection to remember and honor departed shipmates.

Decks that are usually filled with the landlubbers awestruck at the might of the New Jersey or that ring with the laughter of school kids over childish things became silent with reverence as the roll of

the departed was read by Association Chaplain Vance Worrell while Rick Tully rang the quartermaster's bell in honor of shipmates who are departed, but not forgotten.



There was hardly a dry eye in the house as Bob Hauge took the podium to eulogize his AE-1 shipmate and friend of more than three-score years, Leonard Rozycki, who

passed away late last year.

It took an act of personal courage for Bob to

Until we meet again...

Wesley Allard (AE-1)

Richard M. Barksdale (AE-1)

Allison D. Deal (AE-24)

Raymond P. Gillman (AE-24)

George W. McKellar, Sr. (AE-1)

Charles A. Moshenrose (AE-24)

Leonard E. Rozycki (AE-1)



attend the memorial service. Saddened by this old friend's death and his not being able to attend Leonard Rozycki's funeral in Chicago, Bob had planned to drink a solitary toast to 'Ski.'

Instead, the self-described *Twilight Sailor* shared his grief and Leonard Rozycki's life with all of us, adding a special poignancy to the already solemn occasion. (Bob Hauge tells the tale of the very special friendship that bound the Three Pyro Musketeers in his own words on the adjoining page.)

The memorial ceremony concluded as Master at Arms Jasper Strunk consigned a wreath to the deep, sending a floral tribute floating in the tides to join the departed in a land of fair winds and following seas.



Bob Hauge remembers The Three Musketeers

The USS Pyro AE-1 Three Musketeers are a tradition that commenced on the decks of the AE-1 during WW2. The 'musketeers' were made up of the following crew members: Leonard Rozycki, Irv Palm and Bob Hauge.

As WW2 came to an end with the surrender of Japan while AE-1 was serving the fleet in the Southwest Pacific, Navy personnel with the required 56 points were transferred back to the States for discharge. Hauge also had the required points, as Rozycki reminded him over and over, but Hauge was Regular Navy and still had three remaining years to serve on his then-current hitch, which eventually became a twenty year term.

Thus, Rozycki & Palm cheerfully deserted Hauge who remained on the ship to clean up the messes all those reserves had left from the war.



This broke up the Three Musketeers for thirty-eight years. Irv Palm became a successful jeweler with a store in Red Oak, Iowa. Rozycki, thanks to the damage control experience on the AE-1, became a Chicago, IL, fire fighter, retiring as a lieutenant. The junior third musketeer made a career in the Navy, retiring after twenty years and was then employed by Lockheed Missile & Space Company for twenty-seven years.

In 1983, a group of ex-AE-1 sailors who had previously met in small groups yearly while raising their families decided to go for

the big one: That year the first USS Pyro AE-1 reunion gathered with some 100 sailors and spouses in attendance.. This original group scrounged the whole country for prospective AE-1 sailors – mind you, this was way before the days of computers and Rags Gillman.

Rozycki had the most difficult task to perform: To locate third musketeer, Hauge, tracing his whereabouts from California to South Carolina through his daughter, Bobbie, in Texas.

The musketeers were reunited and the renewed friendship twenty five years.

Then – as they had in 1945 – the two elder musketeers sadly made sudden departures. This was the final breakup of the musketeers as ill health took its toll. First Palm and then Rozycki once again bailed out, leaving the 'kid,' Hauge, to carry on the musketeer tradition by attending the USS Pyro reunions.

At the recent Philly Reunion, Hauge had mixed emotions about attending future reunions. Finally, he realized that he must carry on the Three Musketeers' reunion tradition and not give up the ship: Once a Pyroman always a Pyroman! Damn the excuses. He decided to make the yearly reunions on behalf of the Rozycki and Palm, who are no doubt looking down on earth wondering if their old shipmate and comrade is still trying to sing *Anchors Aweigh* and *Bell Bottoms Drawers*—off key, as usual, natch!

As the daily tides roll in and out, Hauge sheds AE-1 tears for his two best shipmates and friends, men he had the very good fortune of personally knowing for SIXTY-FIVE YEARS.

Farewell, Rozycki and Palm! Smooth sailing and calm seas wherever you venture. Hauge is now running up those bar bills in ya'll's names, but now you're not around to bail him out! So be it as we bid 'Sayonara' until we once again come together as the Three Musketeers in the big blue sky way, way up yonder.

The third musketeer could not be located by the Rozycki family for notification of his departure as Hauge had once more relocated, this time from Florida to Texas where he was belatedly made aware of Rozycki's departure by a Chicago Tribune obituary.

However, Hauge believes he made amends by saying a few emotional words in behalf of Rozycki during the memorial service on the deck of the battleship USS New Jersey during the Philly Reunion. All in attendance joined with their individual thoughts prayers in remembrance of Leonard E. Rozycki. Last but not least Hauge wore an ID picture around his neck of Rozycki and him taken at the 1983 reunion throughout the reunion events. Certainly a fitting farewell remembrance for a lifelong, everlasting shipmate. —**Bob Hauge**

Membership meeting highlights

Award-winning association Secretary Doug Wisher records meeting minutes and transcribes them into meticulous notes for presentation at the following year's gathering.

Below is a summation of this year's discussions:

- In accordance with the bylaws, the meeting was called to order, the Pledge of Allegiance recited, the chaplain offered an opening prayer and each member present introduced himself.
- The names of departed shipmates were read.
- Minutes of the 2006 meeting were deemed read and approved.
- The treasurer reported a cash balance of \$5,232 plus purchase of a \$5,000 CD. The treasurer discussed regulations limiting cash surpluses and suggested development of a plan to use excess funds for good causes. The audit committee reported accounts were in good order.
- The president reported, based on conversations with an attorney, that the association/officers are generally free from liability over possible reunion mishaps.
- The executive committee announced plans to make a version of the association roster available on the website and by mail/e-mail to all Pyro veterans.
- The president announced — in keeping with recent custom — that a memory book on disk would be mailed to all reunion participants and any other member who requested one.
- After a lengthy discussion of possible reunion sites as well as ways and means of attracting additional reunion participation, it was decided that a survey be conducted to gauge members' views. (see pages 8 and 10)
- Proposals to grant all dues-exempt members lifetime member status and to offer free memberships to surviving spouses of future deceased members were approved.
- The president announced his intention to appoint spouses as well as members to committees and appointive offices.
- The president will explore possible website enhancements with Bob Smiley and C. Ray Nichol.



- Elections of officers: The president, secretary and vice president having expressed a willingness to serve another term, Jared Cameron, Douglas Wisher and Billy Eckstine were reelected by acclamation.
- The president announced the reappointment of appointed officers: Jasper Strunk, MAA; Vance Worrell, chaplain; and Tony Sieverin, historian.
- The membership designated Secretary Doug Wisher as the alternative signatory on association bank accounts; Treasurer Tom Sanborn will implement with the association's bank.
- The membership expressed its gratitude to Larry Shepline for outstanding service as reunion chairman.
- Larry Shepline proposed a new drive to expand association membership. A glutton for punishment, he then agreed to head the drive and will no-doubt be inundated with an army of offers from members anxious to help. (Subsequently, Bob Smiley agreed to provide information used in the late Chief Ray Gillman's earlier successful efforts to track down and recruit members to Membership Czar Shepline.)
- The meeting was adjourned after a short 2.5 hours with most everyone still speaking to everyone else, much to the delight of the president and many others.

Pyro pfun and pfrolics in Philly in as many photos as can be crammed on one page

So you want the glory of being reunion chairman



Bev Worrell, Linda Wisher and Bob Hauge 'congratulate' Larry Shepline on reunion arrangements in a phony, posed photo.

The Greatest Generation



AE-1 vets Robert Kelly, Bob Mahan, Don Hunt Joe Nalle, Tom Ryan, Bob Hauge, Bill Burgert and Ed Stone

First timers and 'old timers' we haven't seen for a while



First-timer Charlie Batter, AE-24 XO FT); First-timer Clyde Griffith, AE-24, 63-65 (FT); Don McClurg, AE-24, 62-63; First-timer Frank Fanning, AE-24, 63-65; and Don Sullivan, AE-24, 62-62.

Boogie to Burgert!



Shall we dance? (L to R and top to bottom): Eckstine & Eckstine; Knapp & Mahan; Scanlan & Ryan; Smiley & Golay; Sanborn & Golay; Golay & Strunk; Moulton & Moulton; Fanning & Eckstine; Eckstine & Golay; Wisher & Wisher

Obligatory goofy photo of Shepline and Wichtrich



See the upcoming USS PYRO 2007 Reunion Memory Book for more, larger photos.

Where do **you** want to muster in 2008?

It wouldn't have been a USS Pyro Association general membership meeting without a little controversy. But the bulk of this year's spirited discussion was based on a simple question **from** the folks who attend nearly every reunion **to** our shipmates who seldom, if ever attend a reunion:

What can we do to get you to join us?

If you look over previous editions of *The Scuttlebutt* or reunion memory books since Jacksonville, just about the same cadre of Pyromaniacs and their significant others – give or take a wedding, back injury or, alas, funeral – attend reunions. On shore or at sea... In the Big Easy, the City of Brotherly Love or La-La Land.

Those constant attendees really like each other and have a great time at reunions. And first-timers have such a good time that they kick themselves for not joining in earlier and often ship over for the next gathering. However, they miss **you**, the people who won't go to a reunion for love or money.

So a major part of the membership meeting was dedicated to discussing how we can get you to show up at the next reunion. And everyone had a theory about why **you** weren't in Philadelphia. Some think the problem is location. Some think it's health issues. Or finances. Or that your spouses/parole officers didn't want you partying with sailors. Someone even wondered if you just don't like us.

Then something very unusual happened, really unusual considering that this was a gathering of chief petty officers, snipes, deck apes, scope dopes, supply corps pukers, not to mention officers and gentlemen by act of Congress – folks who generally think they know, well, everything about everything.

The group concluded: *We don't know why you don't come to reunions.*

Somebody brilliant – you guessed it, the president – said:

"Let's ask them!"

And that's what this and the page to the right are about: **Finding out what it will take to get you to attend the next reunion.**

Questions cover timing, cost and location – you can choose between one of the three 2008 reunion locations discussed at the meeting or write in a location of your choice. We can't promise you'll get your way, but your opinion will count!

But here's the rub: If you don't fill out the form and return it, the trees that went into these pages of *The Scuttlebutt* will have died in vain and we won't know what you want.

2008 Reunion sites

The 'finalists'

The green machine

Pacific Northwest: Seattle or Portland

Plusses:

- West Coast location
- Relative low price for a big city (Portland less costly)
- Reunion committee volunteers signed up
- Abundant nature/activities

Minuses:

- West Coast location — not centrally located
- Still an airplane ride from most parts of California
- Not likely to find downtown rooms under \$100



Mirage or desert delight?

Nevada—in or out of Vegas

Plusses:

- Location near West Coast
- Cheap flights to Las Vegas
- Folks **say** prices can be very low outside Las Vegas
- Casinos, food and entertainment
- Group-friendly area

Minuses:

- Folks say Nevada is inexpensive and fun, but details are scanty
- Some love it, some hate it
- No obvious local reunion chairman



Back to where it all began

Dubuque, IA, site of the first Pyro reunion

Plusses:

- Sentimental favorite for 25th anniversary reunion
- Central location
- Golf and riverboats without big city rates

Minuses:

- Multi-connection air flights
- No bright lights and big city



Member survey: Reunion 2008

Previous/ future reunion participation

Please circle one answer in each column

I attended: the 2007 2006 2005 an earlier reunion

I plan to attend: 2008 reunion a future reunion

If you plan to attend future reunions, please tell us how you select which reunions to attend.

Please circle the answer or answers that best expressed your reasons

I choose reunions based on:

- A) Nearness of site to my home
- B) Cost
- C) My health
- D) Spouse's health
- E) Timing/date of reunion
- F) Tours and things to do

Other: _____

Reunion location

- A) I will attend a reunion most anywhere.
- B) I only consider reunion venues I can drive to.
- C) I only consider reunions in my area

Other: _____

2008 reunion sites

All other things (costs, timing, etc.) being equal, I prefer:

- A) Pacific Northwest (Seattle) (Portland)
- B) Nevada (Las Vegas) (Site outside of Las Vegas)
- C) Dubuque, Iowa
- D) The site is not important
- E. Some place entirely different: (Please specify)

Hotel cost

- A) I want a hotel that costs \$100 or less
 - B) I'm willing to pay more for a big city hotel
 - C) The sky's the limit if it's fun
- Tours and activities

- A) All I'm really interested in is meeting shipmates
- B) I'd like a few tours
- C) I prefer a full vacation program

For folks who have never attended a reunion

Here's what it would take to get me to show up: -

Would financial help from your shipmates make a difference? (This reply will be held in the strictest confidence)

Don't hold your breath! I won't attend because:

- A) Cost
- B) My health
- C) Spouse's health
- D) Timing/date of reunion
- E) Not interested in travelling
- F) I'm happy just reading *The Scuttlebutt*
- G) No time: I still work or have kids
- H) My spouse/parole officer won't let me.
- I) I don't know anyone who attends.

Other: _____

Name: _____ (optional)

Address _____

Please return this form to scuttlebutt@comcast.net or
 Jared Cameron
 3808 Brighton Ct
 Alexandria, VA 22305-1571

USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

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

Email:
wisherdj@fuse.net



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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

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