

MAY 1989

1

THE P O I N T E R



WE THE U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD W.W.I VETS.
WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR BROTHERS
OF THE VIETNAM WAR VETS. FOR REMEMBERING
US WHEN THEY RAISED THIS
HISTORICAL FLAG POLE THAT WAS SALVAGED
WHEN THE CENTER WAS DEMOLISHED.
THE FLAG POLE WAS ABOARD THE BATTLESHIP
U.S.S. BROOKLYN WHICH ENGAGED
OUR ENEMYS IN THE SPANISH AMERICAN, W.W.I
WARS AND THE ARMED GUARD CENTER
DURING W.W.I. IT WAS BROUGHT BACK TO
HONOR ALL VETERANS WHICH
FOUGHT FOR OUR COUNTRY.

DEDICATED JULY 29, 1987

THE POINTER

Officers for 1989

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5712 Partridge Lane
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1989 Reunion Hostess
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ATTENTION

You know where you are.
You know where we are.
We know where we are.
But we don't always know where you are.
Please notify us when you move.

Non-Profit Organization
Tax Exempt No. 74-2316668

AND

THE

PLANE SHOOTER

Our Motto: "We aim To Deliver" and "We Did"

USN Armed Guard World War II Veterans

"PLAIN SHOOTING FOR PLANE SHOOTERS"

Dear Crew, Ladies and Friends:

May 5, 1989

AHOY!! Y*ALL LANDLUBBERS!! Time is drawing near for the best "BULLSESSION" in History which will take place in Seattle, Washington with Madelyn Rigg, Billie and Richard Kohse and the "NORTHWEST PASSAGE CREW", laying the "GANGPLANK" for our U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW I and WW II Veterans. They have labored two years for your appearance and you have waited 45 years for this occasion so now is your chance to catch up and renew your memories with your shipmates. You fought for this right and earned every minute of it. Other things can wait as the day you were sworn in to serve your country from the enemy of that era.

I hope you have enjoyed the "POINTER"s and the other information sent to you in the past. Many of you have not responded pro or con as to whether you have been receiving them or not, nor have you sent in your ship's names and dates aboard. At the 1989 Reunion, I will have 15 alphabetical listing of the over 6200 names on the mailing list and will also have 15 lists of same names in "ZIP CODE". By the "ZIPCODE" list, you can locate those in your area. I encourage you to get the local men together for your own "BULLSESSION". You'll be glad you did. The reason I tell you this is that many did not know these lists existed, and were at "ALL REUNIONS". The name and location of these rooms will be in your packet at the Registration Desk. If you get your names into me prior to printout date, it will be available to all, whether attending or not. Those attending will see them and contact you. PLEASE READ YOUR SCHEDULE UPON ARRIVING!!

I will apologize for the small print in this and future "POINTER"s. The cost to enlarge the print would have been over \$1500.00 on the last copy. I have to cut corners to get as much info out as possible, at the lowest possible cost. I do know that most of our "senses" are not what they used to be. This POINTER is to encourage you to attend the Seattle Reunion, inform you of Volume III HISTORY BOOK, the "REUNIONS'INC." yearly book, the S.S.JEREMIAH O'BRIEN, the S.S. JOHN W.BROWN and other ARMED GUARD info. This will be that last "POINTER" you will until after the reunion. Then you will get some wonderful stories!!

We will have Armed Guard Caps, Decals, Bumper Stickers, etc. at the reunion for you to purchase, if you like. We will have copies of the Vol.I and Vol.II Armed Guard History Books, published by Taylor Publishing Co. for you to look at in case you are interested. It will give you an idea of what the Volume III Book will look like and I hope all that can will take part in this endeavor. To my knowledge, this will be the last book to be printed, as such. Susan informs me that she is processing them, as time allows. Our cutoff date will be announced at the Seattle Reunion. Many ordered additional ones for their family and some

continued to Page 2

bought them to go into their local State Library. It is your choice to make. The enclosed order form will be the last one you will get, unless you should lose it and send for one, so take care of it, please.

I would like to bring your attention to the Port Chicago, Calif. dedication to take place July 16, 1989. Contact Carl Winder 1734 Pilgrim Ave. 94040. I would appreciate it if you want to have a "Plaque Dedication" in the future, please hold it six months prior to, or six months after the next reunion. It is only fair to those who are the Hosts of that one year. Or, if you are going to have it near the dates we voted on, please notify the National Host and maybe he can change the National Reunion to suit you. I think it only fitting for someone on the West Coast to be in charge of the Plaque when, and if one is to be erected at Treasure Island and a committee will be appointed at the Seattle Reunion. If you would like to head this up and from that area, please step forward and let it be known so the wording on the plaque be prepared and approved. We will give everyone a chance to participate in this Historical Event as we did with LITTLE CREEK, VA, and the recent one at BROOKLYN, New York on April 12, 1989. This is "your" organization. You signed up when you went into the ARMED GUARD and that automatic made you "ARMED GUARD", with or without dues or donations.

Announcements for Mini-Reunions and our Cowrades in Area, such as; DESA, Etc. will be in the first "POINTER" after the National Reunion. For your FLEET SHIP reunions, check your local Veteran's organization's magazines. Also, for your personal records, call the V.A. and ask them to send Form-180 to fill out. If you need medical assistance, contact your local V.A. or Congressman for help.

Madelyn Rigg has informed me that "if" you are handi-capped, you should notify the Hotel "SEA-TAC INN" when making reservations, even to non-smoking rooms. If you failed to do so, please do so now to save confusion upon arrival. The TOUR BUSES are equipped to handle handi-cap personnel. You are one of us and you will be treated as such. If you have other questions concerning your stay there, let Madelyn and Billie give you the answers "NOW", for the last week is hectic.

Please send the Name (his + hers) Address, Box and Tel.#s, of Armed Guard that you know on to the "RETURN ADDRESS" on the outside of this POINTER. If you send them to some one else, be sure to send duplicate here for I have to insert info into this computer to get them on mailing list. "DO NOT HOLD" for the reunion. Let us give them a "fighting" chance to be there too!! Getting a name 3 months after a reunion is not fair to that man who is interested, and wants to attend. After all, he served in the war, too. Check with the names you have sent in to see if he is on the mailing list. I could have made a mistake in entering his name into the computer and mail was returned. I have done this in the past and by the time I get the returned mail, I can't find who sent it in.

NOTICE: NO MORE!!

RALPH LUCAS of 1220 Hawthorne Road, Hanahan, S. C. 29406 1-803-747-2031 has the "BACKUP COMPUTER" to inform you of your crew we have listed on your ships. He has only received approximately 300 requests from the 6250 men we have listed so far. He awaits your "SELF-ADDRESSED-STAMPED-ENVELOPE", if interested. He has volunteered for this "Project" and the other 5900 should get on with it!!! It is disheartening to see a shipmate sail on to that undiscovered country, and as you mark him off the mailing list seeing where we have had his shipmates listed for several years. Ralph and I can not do it all. You send me names and ships; send him the S.A.S.E letter. Please cooperate!! He's waiting to help you.

We voted at the Norfolk, Virginia 1985 reunion to adopt the Eagle clutching the sub and plane as the "U.S.N. ARMED GUARD VETERAN's Official Insignia with the MOTTO "WE AIM TO DELIVER". We did not know at the time of Insignias at Treasure Island or Algiers, La. (New Orleans-MOLA). I place each on the outside cover of the "POINTER" in honor to all 144,970 who served through these facilities. The Lone Sailor is in HONOR to all Navy personnel who has served, and it is standing across from the Archives Building on Pennsylvania Ave., in our Nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C. If you're there, go by to see him. A \$25.00 donation is required to have your name entered in the NAVY LOG in the Memorial. According to Robert Jones of the "Lone Sailor Statue Committee", over 115,000 Navy Personnel names are already listed. He asked me to suggest that a gift at Father's Day in Memory to your Dad who served would be a great gift. I agree!! By contributing, you will automatically be on their mailing list and kept up-to-date with the progress in completion of the Memorial which is only 14 months away. Call thee, 1-800-821-8892 for more information. The address is: U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation, P.O. Box 12728, Arlington, Va. 22209-8728.

The S.S. John W. Brown Project has started to take form and on schedule with the lights being turned on but there is much work to be done!! Some guns have been located and the paper work is in progress. The other Liberty Ship, S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien, needs financial support to keep her floating, too. See the enclosed copy of letters from both ships. Walter L. Magalis, 5010 Leeds Ave, Baltimore, Maryland 21227 301-242-4375 has been appointed Vice Chairman of the JWB serving on the Executive Committee and represents the Armed Guard. Madelyn and Andy Knapp do not carry a title but they and others are at work, too. Many other are helping out, too. Maybe you have an extra day to help, or donate.

It has been a pleasure to send out the last three "POINTER"s and 12 other pages to each new "OL'SALT" that we locate, plus an Armed Guard Bumper Sticker and a decal. Your generous donations keep them going to these men, as donations keep the "POINTER" coming to your door. We are not NAVY SUBSIDIZED, so remember to contribute a little if you can to keep the U.S.N. ARMED GUARD ALIVE for just a little while longer. Be thankful that you're here and able to read it.

The cost of "RETURN MAIL REQUESTED" and then to re-send you the "POINTER" gets to be costly with so many having winter and summer homes, or just changing your address and in some cases, the changing of zip codes or adding Box Numbers. It would help alot to inform me as soon as possible of such changes. A "CHANGE" in DATES FOR OUR RALEIGH, N.C. ARMED GUARD BREAKFAST CLUB WILL BE THE "FIRST" (1st) SATURDAY of the month starting with JULY 1, 1989. We still meet at the BAR-B-QUE LODGE 4600 N. BLVD on #1 North. There are ample hotels within 1 mile radius. WE WILL "NOT" MEET THE LAST SAT. IN JUNE DUE TO THE FACT WE WILL BE IN SEATTLE!!

As I read the letter from Don Gleason, Topeka, Ks. and the "Mini-Reunion", held recently and also from Billie Kohse of the one held in Olympia, it is great to know the reunions went well. It's equally as great to get the letters from the "NEW OL'SALTS" the same day who attended and to say they met a shipmate and how they enjoyed themselves. Be in Seattle and you'll enjoy it more!!

Many had wanted the list of names, and L.D. and I thought that by placing them in the "REUNION YEARLY BOOK", along with your pictures taken at National and sent in to REUNION, INC. P.O. BOX 876, ORLANDO, FL. 32802-0876 that it would help out, but to do so, the size of the pictures were cut down which did not go over too good so only the names of those having their pictures taken in Seattle, or the ones sending in their pictures and money to them will have their addresses in the book. Madelyn Rigg, Billie and Richard Kohse will be in charge of this year's book and the Hosts for each year will do their own or be responsible for it and it's contents. Larry French will be taking pictures again so please take time to have your "MUG" shots taken. Group pictures will be a full page so you can recognize who you are. Time and place will be announced in your folder.

TIPS for a great Reunion in Seattle: Be sure to unplug your coffee pot before leaving home. Have someone look after your pets, "STOP" the PAPER, get someone to get in mail. Turn air condition up to 78 degrees, give your family the SEA-TAC INN LOCAL PHONE NUMBER 1-206-246-8600 AND YOUR ROOM NUMBER. Leave a light on so you can turn it off when you get back from having a WONDERFUL TIME!!

Enclosed is a "TOUR SCHEDULE" of the Boeing Plant that was overlooked, and if you are interested, work it into your schedule. Please note that only "45" can go on June 26th, 90 on Friday Morning and 90 on Friday evening. It will be on a "FIRST PAY-ONLY TO GO". Other's money will be refunded. Since I will be there on the 17th to see the "SITES" before the reunion. I hope to take it in before Tuesday if possible. Then, I will have more time in helping you find shipmates from the lists or make any corrections, so write it down before hand. From January, 1982, when I learned of the first reunion in Winchester, Kentucky, it has been my desire to find as many of the Armed Guard Crew as possible for the NEXT REUNION. This is your chance to attend and be with the greatest crew that ever sailed the Seven Seas. I know that all the 6200 on the mailing list can not be there in body but we all know they will be there in "SPIRIT". Should you decide at the last minute to go, "Y'ALL" come on and join in. You will never regret it. May you have a safe trip there and back and locate a shipmate. (cal)

LAST	FIRST & INITIAL	IN MEMORY		WIFE	DATE
		CITY	STATE		
Brav	Earl K.	Salinas	Ks		7/88
Cahill	William C.	Las Vegas	Nv	Helen	3/89
Cooper	Charles W.	Arlington	Tx	?	11/88
Decker	Carl	Shadyside	Oh		11/87
Deutsch	William	Willoughby	Oh	Hilda	88
Farris	Harry	Russellville	Mo	?	89
Kyc	Chester	East Hartford	Ct	Helen	2/89
Lewis	J.R.	Minuth	Ni	Dieterie	1/89
McDonald	Hugh	Hawthorne	NJ	?	89
Nosal	John	Chicago	Il	Catherine	89
Novitsky	John	Coaldale	Pa		6/78
Royall	John B.	Morehead City	NC	?	2/89
Schultheis	Stanley R.	Baltimore	Md	Gloria	1/89
Takacs	Eugene	Perth Amboy	NJ-Fla	Elizabeth	2/89
Warren	Clifford	Wichita	Ks	?	1/88

Deceased as of 4/24/89 whose names were sent in by different sources. Our condolences are extended to our departed brother's families and friends.


Special Notice:

Anyone knowing Leo Joseph Schoppeyer who served on the S.S. Dona Aurora, sunk on 12/25/42 in the Atlantic and was in a liferaft for 30 days with Arthur Dodrill, Ridgely, WA and Earl Ward, Lakefield, Nn., contact National. (cal)

SPECIAL ITEM OF INTEREST

The first Armed Merchant ship to be sunk in WW I by a German Submarine was the S.S. AZTEC on April 2, 1917 of of Brest, France during heavy seas according to an article sent to me by James Ostermeyer 4717 E. Willow Dr. Phoenix, Ar. 85032 taken from "THE CHICAGO DAILY TRIBUNE" on 4/3/17. It lists Lt. Fuller Bresham, city unknown, W.H. Douglas, Terre Haute, Indiana; Adolph Henrickson, Minneapolis, Minnesota and G.W. Whitney of Cincinnati by name as Armed Guard. I hope to have a complete story in the next "POINTER" and the other "9" Armed Guard names and include the whole story with names of the merchant crew also. The MM Crew names listed were I.J. Anderson, Brooklyn, N.Y.; G.C. Larkins, West Lynn, Mass.; E.J. O'Brien, Passiac, N.J.; Harry Larkins, West Lynn, Mass.; Herbert Collins, 310 E. 5th St., Wilmington, Del.; Charles Rickson, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Chester T. Lee, 111 Sacramento St., San Francisco, Ca.; Henry T. Long, and Watson Siassey, NYC, NY.; Charles Kelly, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Julian Macomber, Charles Pineapple, Ekila Keaki, Tate Davis, and H.K. Price of Honolulu, Hawaii. None of the A.G. Crew were killed but the MM suffered many casualties. Maybe some of you would like to do research in your area for relatives. I place this in the "POINTER" as a "FORGOTTEN HEROES" episode that should have been kept alive.

OOOO



ANCIENT ORDER OF THE DEEP

Richard McDonald Sea. Yc

Crossed the equator on May 19, 1942. In Latitude 00° and Longitude "a military secret." On board the United States Troop Transport, President Monroe. Was duly initiated and is now,

A TRUSTY SHELLBACK.

Davy Jones
His Majesty's Scribe

Neptunus Rex
Ruler of the Raging Main



"NORTHWESTERLY"
AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS
 1808 206th SW
 LYNNWOOD, WASHINGTON 98036



IN MEMORY OF
 STERLING KRONE - WILLIAM GOOD
 RENNIE COLLINGE
 AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS
 PUGET SOUND CHAPTER

DEAR CHARLES,

WE WISH OUR ARMED GUARD
 SHIPMATES THE VERY BEST.
 THE "REEFERS" & "NITE LUNCH"
 ARE YOURS, COME REUNION TIME!
 WE HOPE THE SEATTLE REUNION
 WILL BE THE BEST EVER FOR YOU.

George

S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN



LIBERTY SHIP

Open to the public
Pier 3, Fort Mason Center

SAN FRANCISCO BAY

HYDE STREET PIER
HISTORIC SHIPS



S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN

FORT MASON CENTER

Pier 3

U.S.S. PAMPANITO

BALCLUTHA

ALCATRAZ FERRY

Pier 45

Pier 43

Pier 41

Marina Blvd.

Street
Entrance
to
Fort
Mason

FORT

National
Maritime

[REDACTED]

"Reunions" Inc.

P.O. Box 876
Orlando, Florida 32802-0876

6
Notice y'all
Profits go to 1990
Hosts. TAKE PART!!
C.A.L.

Dear USN Armed Guard WW II Veterans,

Congratulations on your upcoming reunion!

"Reunions" Inc. will again record the events for your reunion committee. We will also compile the Memory Book of this event for you.

We will have a camera set up and a photographer to cover the event and ask that every reunion member and their guest to please stop by to have your photograph taken. There is no charge or obligation. Photographs of all participants attending the reunion plus activity and candid photos will be compiled into the Reunion Memory Book. If you wish to purchase one of the books the price is only \$12.00 which includes postage and handling to be mailed to you.

A big thank you is in order in advance to Madelyn Rigg and your other 1989 reunion hosts, Richard and Billie Kohse for laying out this year's reunion memory book.

Also this year, we hope to expedite the production schedule and shipping date of your memory book by starting production immediately after the reunion.

If you are unable to attend the reunion, your friends would still enjoy seeing you included in the Memory Book. If you have a small photo of you and/or your family, please enclose. We will submit the picture to your reunion committee to be included in the Memory Book.

If you are not attending the reunion, you still can order a copy of the Memory Book at this time by including your check for \$12.00 with the form below and mail to "Reunions" Inc.

Mail to: "Reunions" Inc.
P.O. Box 876
Orlando, Florida 32802-0876

(Detach here:)

Hello C. A.

Our Mini Reunion we think was a success, at least everyone there seemed to be having a good time and then we invited those that wanted to to come to our house afterwards and look over the ship lists and the names.

Few interesting stories came out of that Reunion. Bill Mace from Overland Park and Paul Markley of Topeka served on the same ship and they met here in Topeka for the first time since the war. One man from Illinois and the other from Oklahoma sat across the table from each other and discovered that they had been in Boot Camp together at Great Lakes. We had quite a few that told us that they would be there but apparently couldn't make it, some live on farms and probably needed to be home to get their crops planted. Maybe we can catch them in September when we have our next little get together.

Sending you an article that appeared in our Topeka Daily Capital, also sending you a copy of what we submitted to them to be printed, as you can see, there was a lot left out and also a lot printed that was not in our copy, also our Reunion was on Saturday April 8th and the Article was printed on Tuesday April 11th. So far we have had one call from an Armed Guard that didn't know we had been having Reunions.

We know the feeling that you have when you get a letter of thanks showing their appreciation, we have gotten several and even got a letter today from one of the fellows who has been ill and couldn't get there, he sent us \$2.00 to help with the mailing so we would be sure to send him our next notice. We were going to send him one anyway!

Bill Bartzatt from Lincoln, Nebraska said he was at the first Reunion in Winchester, Ky. There's a place that the National should be held, if you are ever in Lincoln stop by their American Legion Post. It is the biggest one in the world and it is just beautiful and serves excellent food.

See you in Seattle.

Don "Jack" and Henrietta Gleason

The Topeka Capital-Journal, Tuesday, April 11, 1989 7-A

65 former members of USNAG reunite

Sixty-five former members of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard and their wives gathered Saturday at the American Legion Post No. 1 for the sixth semiannual mini-reunion of the group.

The first Topeka semiannual mini-reunion was organized, with the help of the late Peggy Greene, by Carl Ossman. It was attended by 45 men and their wives. Saturday's mini-reunion brought USNAG veterans to Topeka from Illinois, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri.

Ossman and Don and Henrietta Gleason were hosts for Saturday's event. Henrietta Gleason said the veterans and their wives had dinner

at the Legion, and then each veteran gave a short summary of his experiences in the war.

"Some of them had two or three ships shot from underneath them," she said, adding that she was moved to hear "of all the hardships they went through."

The USNAG was formed in World War I, deactivated after the armistice and reactivated in World War II. It was made up of U.S. Navy personnel who were ordered to stay on board a U.S. Merchant Marine cargo vessel that was under attack and keep firing at the enemy as long as the cargo ship was afloat.

The USNAG mission was to keep the enemy from crippling a ship,

then boarding her and stealing the cargo. Ossman said USNAG servicemen are "unsung heroes" of World War II. "It was tantamount to a suicide mission," he said.

About 144,970 people served in the USNAG in World War II aboard 6,236 merchant ships of all types, of which 710 were sunk. There were 2,710 Liberty class vessels, of which 216 were sunk and many others damaged. There were 1,180 USNAG sailors killed in action.

One convoy, on the run to Murmansk, in the Soviet Union, had 23 ships sunk and 153 USNAG sailors killed.

For more information about the organization, call the Gleasons at 234-6087.



NATIONAL LIBERTY SHIP MEMORIAL

SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN

Citizens Stamp Advisory Board
United States Postal Service
Washington, D.C.

RE: Proposal for a 1993 Commemorative Stamp for the 50th Anniversary of the Launching of the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien*, America's last unaltered Liberty Ship in Operating Condition

The undersigned, who built, sailed, defended, repaired and supplied Liberty Ships during World War II, and/or who are Merchant Marine seamen either active or retired, and/or who are supporters of the U.S. Merchant Marine, and/or who are veterans of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard who manned the armament on Liberty Ships, and/or who are members of the Volunteer Crew and their supporters preserving, restoring and presenting to the public the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien*, respectively propose a stamp be issued to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the launching of the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien* at the New England Shipbuilding Corporation in South Portland, Maine on 17 June 1943. This survivor of the more than 2,700 Liberty Ships built between 1941 and 1945 participated in both the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters during WWII including 11 landings at Omaha or Utah Beachheads at Normandy in 1944. She was declared a National Monument in 1978 and placed on the National Register as an Historic Object. In 1984, she was designated a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark. The ship is named for Jeremiah O'Brien of Machias, Maine, who led a volunteer crew against the British in 1775, capturing a British schooner thereby achieving the first Yankee Naval Victory of the Revolutionary War. The undersigned believe the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien* is worthy of a commemorative stamp and support the proposal.

NAME

CITY/STATE



Lone Sailor
DON'T BE ONE



Hey Lone Sailor, there is a reunion in your future----COME TO THE 8th NATIONAL REUNION AT THE RED LION SEATAC ON JUNE 21-25, 1989!

Be there for the GREATEST time of your life to renew old memories. Just think, you old salts might be lucky to find an old shipmate like others have found at National and Mini Reunions. Don Caton and Jim Kavanaugh, shipmates on the George Chaffey, were reunited after 43 years - Brian Kirkpatrick, Clint Ham and Carl Lingenfelter, shipmates on the S.S. Eugene Skinner, after 44 years. SEE WHAT YOU MIGHT MISS IF YOU DON'T COME TO SEATTLE!

On arrival, we'll GREET you! The following are the events which we have scheduled:

1. Wednesday, June 21, 1989 (p.m.) - Longacres Race Track
2. Thursday, June 22, 1989 (all day) - Victoria, B.C. Cruise
3. Friday, June 23, 1989 (a.m.) - Emerald City Tour
4. Friday, June 23, 1989 (p.m.) - Indian Salmon Dinner
5. Saturday, June 24, 1989 (p.m.) - Banquet
6. Sunday, June 25, 1989 (a.m.) - Brunch



For more information on historic places in Washington State, including a listing of museums, country inns, historic hotels, and bed and breakfast homes, call toll-free:

1-800-541-WASH

Outside Washington State

1-800-562-4570

In Washington State

You may also wish to contact the following organizations or any of Washington State's eight tourism regions:

Washington State Parks And Recreation Commission

Interpretive Services
7150 Clearwater Lane, KY-11
Olympia, WA 98504
(206) 753-5838

State Capitol Historical Association

218 West 21st Avenue, KM-11
Olympia, WA 98504
(206) 753-2580

Eastern Washington State Historical Society

West 2316 First Avenue
Spokane, WA 99204
(509) 496-3931

Washington State Historical Society

315 North Stadium Way
Tacoma, WA 98403
(206) 462-2830

Washington Archaeological Research Center

Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164

If you have questions, refer back to the previous "Pointers" or call Madelen Rigg, 1623 S.W. 166th, Seattle, WA 98166, (206-242-9293).

When making reservations at the RED LION INN, SEATAC, 18749 Pacific Highway South, the TOLL-FREE number is 1-800-547-8010 and the Direct Line is 1-206-246-8600 for your convenience. "BE SURE TO TELL THEM YOU ARE WITH THE ARMED GUARD" and "ASK FOR A CONFIRMATION!" The rate is \$60.00 a night. FOR THOSE FLYING IN and "AFTER YOU HAVE CLAIMED YOUR LUGGAGE," the RED LION INN WILL PICK YOU UP if you go in the vicinity of the car rentals and use "TELEPHONE #1."

Madelen Rigg
Madelen Rigg, Hostess

Mr. King of Kingdome fame truly had Tar on his Heels

NEWTON GROVE — Millions of hoop fans will be glued to the tube tonight to watch two of the best college basketball teams in the country have at each other for the national championship.

The game is being played in Seattle, in an arena called The Kingdome. So who the heck is Mr. King and why is there a dome named for him? Was he a great basketball coach? A great benefactor of Seattle? A rich alumnus? Hardly.

His full name was William Rufus Devane King, and he was a farm boy, albeit a rich one, from the Sampson County (N.C.) community of Newton Grove.

Here is the story, thanks to Sampson County historian Oscar Bizzell:

Mr. King was born on April 7, 1786, on his father's plantation near Craddock Creek, about five miles from Newton Grove in a modest, but solidly built, farm house that still stands. Clearly a bright young man, he entered the University of North Carolina at the age of 13 after having attended private schools in Kenansville and Fayetteville.

Mr. King left the university in 1803 — there is some question whether he graduated or not — at the age of 17. Apparently, for all his brainy youth, he was a regular kind of kid who got caught stealing beehives as a college prank.



Dennis Rogers

Deciding to become a lawyer, Mr. King moved to Fayetteville where he worked for lawyer William Duffy. There were no college law schools at the time — which is one reason those distant days were called "the good old days" — so Mr. King worked as an apprentice for Mr. Duffy for three years before moving to Clinton and opening his own law office. He had, by then, finished his education and become a lawyer. And he was all of 26.

But Sampson County loved this fast-tracking kid and at age 22 elected him to the North Carolina House of Commons. By his mid-20s he was serving in Congress in Washington and at age 30 was sent to Russia as part of the United States delegation.

Clinton was simply too small to contain the ambitious Mr. King, so in 1820, after returning to his law office in Clinton, he sold out and moved to

Alabama where he was elected four times to the U.S. Senate. In 1844, returning to the diplomatic service, Mr. King was named minister to France.

But even greater glory and a bizarre kind of fame was soon to be his. He returned to Alabama after his stint in France, but in 1848 the people of Alabama sent him back to the Senate where he remained until he resigned to run for vice president on the Democratic ticket with Franklin Pierce in 1852.

According to a King biography written by UNC Professor Archibald Henderson, "It was generally agreed by his colleagues that William R. King was lacking in brilliant qualities and did not dazzle with forensic eloquence." But apparently he was a master in the mysterious back-room ways of the Senate and knew how to get things done.

Mr. Pierce and Mr. King won the election of 1852, and early in January 1853, Mr. King resigned his Senate seat. But he was a sick man, so before he could be sworn in, he went to Havana, Cuba, to see if the warmer climate would help the case of tuberculosis he had developed.

He did not get better. Unlike now, when presidents and vice presidents are sworn in in January, Inauguration Day in 1853 came on March 4, and Mr. King still was sick in Havana. Since federal law

required the vice president to be sworn in on U.S. soil, a special act of Congress was passed to make an exception in Mr. King's case. On March 4, for the only time in U.S. history, a vice president was sworn into office while in a foreign country.

Mr. King soon headed to Washington, D.C., to take on his new job. But he never made it. He got as far as his Alabama plantation where on April 28, 1853, without ever setting foot in Washington as vice president, he died. He also entered the record books for the shortest term ever served by a vice president.

So what about Seattle and The Kingdome? It seems that Mr. King was a staunch patriot who didn't care much for the English. He avidly had supported the War of 1812, and during Senate negotiations with the English over what would be the border between the United States and Canada, Mr. King came down hard on the side of the U.S. interests. His work led to the creation of what is now the state of Washington, and the grateful people of the Seattle area named their county King County in his honor. So when they built the dome, Mr. King got the nod.

OK, so he didn't invent the four corners offense like UNC coach Dean Smith or Dean Dome fame, but he didn't do too badly for a 13-year-old back country college freshman, now did he?

TEAR OFF HERE AND MAIL RIGHT AWAY

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ PHONE _____

Wednesday, June 21, 1989. Longacre Race Track \$29.00 per person _____

Thursday, June 22, 1989. Victoria, B.C. Cruise \$60.00 per person _____

Friday, June 23, 1989 A.M. Emerald City Tour \$14.00 per person _____

Friday, June 23, 1989 P.M. Indian Salmon Dinner \$32.00 per person _____

Saturday, June 24, 1989. Banquet (Chicken Seattle) \$25.00 per person _____

Sunday, June 25, 1989. Brunch \$13.00 per person _____

Amount Enclosed _____ Check Number _____

Your cancelled check will be your receipt. Bring it with you uphold the fact that you have already paid. Dismissal will be right after the brunch on Sunday morning and BON VOYAGE until CHICAGO 1990!

Tear off and mail to: Madelen R. Rigg, 1623 S.W. 166th, Seattle, WA 98166

Facts and Figures

LOCATION: The Hotel environment consists of courtyards, gardens, an outdoor swimming pool, golf course, lakes with a backdrop of Mt. Rainier. Our architecture is a blend of Pacific Northwest styles consisting of six 3-story wings and one 4-story wing housing 550 guest rooms and an adjacent 14-story tower with 300 additional guest rooms. We're conveniently located seconds from the Seattle Tacoma International Airport and major Inter-state highways. The Kingdome, Seattle Center, the Waterfront, downtown Seattle, Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome are also within minutes.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Our rooms are by no means average; 850 elegant soundproofed guest rooms. Approximately 450 square feet of living area ensures guest comfort. King and Queen sized beds only. In addition, each guest enjoys color television, AM/FM clock radio, individual air conditioning and individual lanais . . . over 300 of our guest rooms offer a spectacular view of our Olympic and Cascade Mountain Ranges, the airport and surrounding area.

SUITES: Three magnificent Presidential Suites, Five King Suites, Four Lakeside Suites, Six Executive Suites and Eleven Family Suites. The Presidential, King and Lakeside Suites are equipped with wet bars, spectacular master bedroom facilities with King-size beds, large sunken bathtubs and jacuzzis, some with built-in television.

MEETING & BANQUET FACILITIES: 27 public rooms with a total of 34,538 square feet of space, which range from 435 square feet to a 13,600 square foot Ballroom. We can accommodate meetings for 10 up to 2,000 and food functions for 20 to 1,700. The Universe Ballroom can accommodate 92 8 x 10 exhibit booths and the Galaxy Ballroom, 46 8 x 10 exhibit booths.

DINING & ENTERTAINMENT FACILITIES: Three magnificent dining rooms with a choice of cuisine to suit every taste. Gourmet dining in Maxi's is truly a memorable experience with food and view (overlooking the Seattle Tacoma International Airport and the surrounding mountain ranges). Or, relax in Pippins, featuring Pacific Northwest seafood. In a hurry? Try our Coffee Garden, bright and cheery! Two lounges, for after work or play, feature some of the finest entertainment for your dancing and listening pleasure.

CONVENTION SERVICES COORDINATION: Our Convention Services Coordinators are an important addition to the Sales and Catering staff, helping to make your job of pre-planning and execution of your convention easier. Once your group is confirmed and your basic program determined, one person will be your major contact from beginning to end.

GROUP RESERVATION SERVICES: An ample supply of guest reservation cards will be made available at no charge, and may be returned directly to our hotel to expedite your reservation procedure. Reservations will be confirmed promptly.

PARKING: Free parking for 1,000 automobiles.

LIMOUSINE SERVICE: Located seconds from the Seattle Tacoma International Airport, the Hotel provides 24-hour complimentary limousine service. We also provide complimentary limousine service between other hotels in the area and to nearby Southcenter Shopping Mall.

PERSONAL SERVICES: Some of the many additional services we offer include: heated outdoor swimming pool, hair styling for men and women, room service, gift shop and car rental agency.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES: Golf just five minutes away; tennis only ten minutes away in either private or public courts; thoroughbred horse racing at Longacres only 10 minutes away; sightseeing tours available year round; shopping at Southcenter Shopping Mall, the Pavilion Mall and SeaTac Mall only 10 minutes away; the Pacific Museum of Flight only 10 minutes away. Swimming, boating, hiking, waterskiing and snow skiing are all within reach. Special packages for sporting events are available.

COMPLETE CONVENTION CENTER: Utilizing the new RED LION INN, the airport area now offers the services of a complete convention center. Our Airport City consists of seven major first-class hotels with close to 2,000 excellent sleeping rooms and over 60 meeting rooms of various sizes located within minutes of each other.

INDIVIDUAL RESERVATION SERVICES: For reservations to any RED LION INN and THUNDERBIRD MOTOR INN, call toll free: 800-547-8010.

ADDITIONAL RED LION INNS and THUNDERBIRD MOTOR INNS INFORMATION: Our family consists of properties in Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Arizona, Nevada, California and Nebraska. Major State Sales Offices and a Corporate Office are available to provide additional information on these facilities.

By special arrangement, we have been able to secure tours of the Boeing 747/767 Plant just for the 8th Armed Guard Reunion.

BOEING 747/767 PLANT TOUR

The name Boeing has become synonymous with transportation through major advancements in the aeronautical industry with their 747 and 767 aircraft. Boeing, pioneers of the "Age of Flight," welcomes you to tour their enormous technical center. A film presentation will inform you about their historical beginnings, present work, and future goals. By motorcoach you will then tour the largest building (by volume) in the world and view the assembly process. This tour will open your eyes to future technology and the aircraft of today and tomorrow.

1989 Price per person: \$14.00

Based on a minimum of 30 participants per motorcoach.

Boeing does not permit children under 12 years old on the tour.

Approximately 3 1/2 hours

Includes:

- Roundtrip Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation
- Entrance fee and guided tour
- Convention Services Northwest Personnel
- All taxes and gratuities



Don't miss out on this great opportunity!

Registration Form

Tuesday, June 20, 1989

2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

1 bus (limit 45 participants)

of
People X Price = Total

_____ X \$ 14.00 = _____

Friday, June 23, 1989 1989

9:30 a.m.-1:00p.m.

(limit 90 participants)

_____ X \$ 14.00 = _____

2:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

(limit 90 participants)

This tour will stop at Tillicum Village and the hotel.

_____ X \$ 14.00 = _____

GRAND TOTAL _____

Your cancelled check will be your receipt. Bring it with you to uphold the fact that you have already paid.

Mail to: Madeline R. Rigg 1623 S.W. 166th Seattle WA 98166 1-206-242-9293

Dear C.A.:

The enclosed "STATUS REPORT" is self-explanatory. After such a long period, I felt that I owed such to many men who have given so generously of their time and effort. The additional documentation which the Navy wanted to be included as a source of future reference required almost four months work, reworking all my reference material, correspondence, etc. It was complicated by the fact that I am having serious problems with my vision-have already lost effective reading vision in one eye and the prognosis for the other is questionable. Hope I'll be able to see and read the book when it finally published.

I have just received a letter from Ken Phillips, the British ex-able seaman who saved survivors of the S.S. Henry Bacon, including Norwegian refugees, one was a baby. You undoubtedly recall the story which you carried in the "POINTER". He has asked me if we have any information on the crew or the Armed Guard. He also would like to locate anyone from the S.S. John H.B. Latrobe which his destroyer HMS Opportune saved from drifting into a mine field. His Skipper is now 85 now and has requested Phillips to see if anyone who remembers the incident can be located. If you could put something to this effect in the "POINTER", we'd both appreciate it. Phillips also inquired if there were any records of members of the Merchant and Armed Guard Crew on the S.S. Russell Briggs, another Liberty carrying Norwegian refugees, and, on which a baby was born during the attacks on "CONVOY 64" from Murmansk, Russia on February 17, 1945.

It has been a long, and sometimes rough road since I elected myself as "MEMBER" of your Armed Guard family on Mother's Day, in 1987. The collection and preparation of the information on the USN Navy Armed Guard of WW II was great fun but the last stages were a real struggle, and I'm glad it is basically over. Thanks again for your long-continuing support. Without your help and the days we spent working the computer, I probably would have given up. I hope that the finished product does "FULL JUSTICE" to the MEN OF THE NAVY ARMED GUARD.

Best regards to you and Hilda, and to the rest of your lovely family-- and congratulations to you for what you and others have done from "SCRATCH"!!

Justin Gleichauf

Justin: In behalf of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard of WW I and II, I want to thank you for such an encouraging and informative letter. It was our privilege and honor to have you visit with us and become one of the USNAG family. I salute you for your courage to undertake the enormous task to put together a book on our "FORGOTTEN UNIT" of that FORGOTTEN WW so that generations to follow will be ever mindful that these things did happen and it will be studied by them so that it will never happen again. Should it ever come to pass that such a Unit is in demand, it is my hope that our Motto will be used: "WE AIM TO DELIVER" for "WE DID". I hope your eyesight improves with each day. (CAL)

(Mr. Leonard Phillips, 8 Redgate, Norwich Cheshire, England, UK ONS-4TQU)

JUSTIN F. GLEICHAUF

MEMORANDUM

222 SHADOW MOUNTAIN DR., AB
EL PASO, TEXAS 79912
(915) 584-6290

To: Friends of the Naval Armed Guard service, U. S. Merchant Marine, Army AGs and volunteer gunners, and the many others who have provided such generous assistance in the preparation of my book on the Naval Armed Guard.

Many of you have written me requesting information on the status or availability of my book on the Navy Armed Guard, and a progress report is in order. Naval Institute Press has approved publication, and it is currently in the hands of a copy editor. Galley proofs are expected to be available in the early fall and publication is tentatively scheduled for next spring.

This will end almost five years of research, personal interviews and voluminous correspondence with over 100 contributors in thirty-six states, England, Canada and Germany. While originally intended to be an informal, highly-personalized account of the Naval Armed Guard service in two World Wars, a final Navy reviewer wrote, "It is an important contribution. I am aware of no overall, published source that contains as much information on the armed guards as this manuscript...there are individual studies of such subjects as the Murmansk Run or specific campaigns in the Battle of the Atlantic, but none has the same scope as this book".

The reviewer then recommended full documentation be included, for use of future researchers. Meeting this requirement led to some delay in processing, but extensive documentation of facts will be contained in chapter notes, at the end of the book.

Distribution will be made by Naval Institute Press through standard channels, details and price to be announced as production proceeds.

It has been my constant aim to present an honest and authentic report on the training (or lack or same), variety of assignments, armament available and the life, and often death, of Armed Guards and their merchant marine shipmates in all theatres of operation. It includes both humor and deepest tragedy, so often found close together. I owe an immense debt of gratitude for the constant cooperation and support of so many, and particularly to the families of men who were lost at sea or subsequently. My sincere thanks to all of you. I hope that you will find this book to be an accurate and worthy description of your service and sacrifice during World War II, so long unrecognized.

Sincerely,

Justin Gleichauf
Justin F. Gleichauf

In addition to your personal history please send any historical photos, unforgettable stories, maps and memorabilia that you think should be considered for publication in Volume III. All items will be catalogued and returned at the end of the project. If possible, have professional copies made of any irreplaceable pictures, and then send the copy.

The book will again be published by Taylor Publishing Company. So don't miss the boat . . . write your history today.

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- Type your personal history in 350 words or less, double spaced please.
- Send black and white photo (then and now).
- Complete the book order form and send with your check.
- Send all items to our address on the order form.

SAMPLE BOOK



Please reserve my copy of "U.S. Navy Armed Guard WW II Veterans, Volume III" at the special pre-publication price of just \$ 49.95
(Includes postage, tax and handling)

SAVE!! I also wish to order _____ additional copies at \$44.95, a savings of \$5.00 each \$ _____
Please personalize _____ books with the following names in bright metallic foil on the covers, at \$5.00 each (Limit to 21 characters, including spaces) \$ _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

TOTAL DUE \$ _____

Check or money order payable to: **USN Armed Guard Book III**

MAIL MY BOOK TO:

Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Mail materials, order form & payment to:

**USN ARMED GUARD
BOOK III**
c/o S. McDonald
104 Bolton Place
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Deadline for receipt of order and materials will be announced later in the **POINTER**. Don't wait until the last minute. Mail your materials and order **TODAY!!!**

HOW TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE INCLUDED

Our preference is that you write a short biographical sketch about yourself, in your own words. But, as an option (for a small fee) we will have your story written and typed for you which will be based on the information you supply on the fact sheet below. (Option 2)

Option 1. If you write the story in your own words

If you do write your own narrative, follow these guidelines:

1. 350 word maximum limit.
2. Write in third person. (As if you were writing about somebody else. Say "he enlisted on" . . . , not "I enlisted on . . .")
3. Use full sentences, not fragments and don't abbreviate.
4. Send a self addressed stamped envelope so that you can see a proof of your story. **This is important.** Don't forget.
5. Send two photographs of yourself, wartime and today.

Option 2. If you want your story written for you. (\$10.00 fee)

* List your ship's NAME + DATE ABOARD SEPARATE

Fill in the blanks:

Name _____ Ship Number (FLEET)
 Rank or Rating _____ Branch of Service _____
 Date of Birth _____ Hometown _____
 Enlistment date _____ Discharge date _____
 Service Assignments (boot camp, schools, and dates attended) _____

Medals, Awards _____

Battles, Major landings and dates: _____

Memorable experiences: _____

Civilian career, spouse name, family, etc. _____

Present Address: _____

Send a photograph of yourself; wartime and today.

* Ships on another sheet

LELAND RIGG

Lee was born August 27, 1921, on a wheat ranch in eastern Washington by the town of Pomeroy. He was raised in Spokane Valley in Eastern Washington. He met Madeline Thore in high school, they married four years later in 1942.



Leland Rigg

They moved to Seattle and Lee worked for Boeing Aircraft Company. They had their first child in 1943.

Lee went into the Navy in 1944, and got his ship the Phillip C. Shera in San Francisco, California, that same year. He served aboard the Shera until the end of the war.

Some of the ports they saw were as follows: Honolulu, Hawaii; Perth, Australia; Calcutta, India; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Lourenco Marques, Mozambique; Rio de Janeiro and Santos, Brazil. At the end of the war the ship went back to New Orleans.

From New Orleans, Lee went back to Seattle to his wife and little girl. In a short time there was another girl and a boy. They now have three children and a foster daughter, eleven grandchildren, and one great grandson.

Lee retired after thirty-seven years in the soft drink industry. Lee died following heart surgery July 9, 1987.

ROBERT F. RIGG

Robert Rigg's story begins in 1939, when his "hero blood" got real thick. He was turned down for reasons you wouldn't believe. This went on and on for about three years and some seven or eight Naval Recruit Centers. Robert finally made it and will not tell how, but was made an Ensign in 1943.



Robert F. Rigg

He was sent to Tucson, Arizona, for indoctrination (or boot camp), then to Gulfport, Mississippi, for gunnery school. He served aboard the following five ships: SS Gulfmaid (Tanker) 6/44 to 8/44; SS Addie Bagley Daniels (Liberty) 10/44 to 3/45; SS Markay (Tanker) 4/45 to 6/45; SS Wayne MacVeagh (Liberty) 8/45 to date unknown; William Schuyler (Liberty) dates unknown.

Robert was sent to Norman, Oklahoma, in 1945, and worked in the Separation Center. He went home in February, 1946, and could not stand civilian life and so he went back into the Navy in August, 1948, in the Pharmacy Section of the M.S.C.

In 1965, Bob went to BUMED as Pharmacy Advisor to the Surgeon General USN. On July 1, 1967, he retired as Captain MSC USN.

So far he has attended all of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard reunions. Bob resides at 39 Cliffside Dr., Moegans Pt., Belton, Texas 76513.

LOUIS V. RITTER

Louis V. Ritter was born on April 4, 1924, in Brooklyn, New York. He enlisted in the Navy on November 19, 1942, and was sworn into the Navy on December 13,



Louis V. Ritter

1942. He went to boot camp at Great Lakes, Illinois, and to gunnery school at Gulfport, Mississippi. Later he was sent to AG New Orleans, Louisiana.

He picked up his first ship the SS Samuel Moody in Mobile, Alabama. He left for New York and then to London, England. While there (1943), they were docked outside the city, which was bombed. They made two more trips that year, broke down and left alone a few times.

Louis was next on the SS Patrick Henry in 1944. It was the third ship into Leghorn, Italy. While there, an ammo barge exploded. The ship rocked back and forth at the dock. After going back to Naples, they picked up German P.O.W.'s to bring back to the States. When the ship got back he was detached and sent to the fleet. Louis was assigned to the carrier USS Boxer CV-21. He went to San Francisco and then to the Pacific. While enroute the war ended. They went on to Japan, China, Hawaii, Saipan and Guam. Louis got off ship in Guam and came home on an APA. He was discharged at Lido Beach, New York, in February, 1946. He joined the Naval Reserve in 1946, and went on cruises to Panama, Bermuda and Europe.

Louis joined the New York City Fire Department in 1955. He now has thirty-one years on the job. He married his wife, Helen, in 1955. They had eight children, including two sets of twins!

GEORGE W. ROARK

George was born in Oneida, Tennessee, February 22, 1921. He enlisted in the Navy July 29, 1942, and attended boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois. After boot camp, he went to gunnery school, Chicago, Illinois. He was then attached to the Armed Guard Center, South Brooklyn, New York, October 15, 1942.



George W. Roark

His first ship assignment was the SS Pan Maryland, sailing to the ports of Texas City, Texas; Liverpool and Manchester, England; Orange, Aruba, NWI; and then to New York.

In New York, he was assigned to the SS Caribbean. They sailed to Curacao, NWI, then back to New York.

Arriving back in New York, he was then assigned to the SS Sachem, on which he sailed to Curacao, NWI, on to Avonmouth, England, back to Curacao, then through the

Panama Canal, back to Curacao, then back to Avonmouth, and finally back to New York.

His next assignment was aboard the SS Edwin M. Scanlon, sailing to Oran, North Africa, and then being transferred to the Navy Hospital 231 at Oran.

The SS Black Hawk was his next assignment. Sailing in the Mediterranean Sea, Naples, Sardinia, Gothenburg, then was involved in the invasion of Southern France. He was in Marseille from August 15 to September 25, 1944. He received the Bronze Star area ribbon, and then returned to the States.

He was then assigned to Camp Shelton, Virginia, 5*38 cal. Electric Hydraulic Gun School. He finished this schooling in February, 1945. As a detached service ordnance officer for Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard, Inc., he worked for the Port Director, Baltimore, Maryland, and then was assigned to stay at Ft. McHenry Coast Guard Base, Baltimore, Maryland.

George was then assigned to the SS Hagerstown Victory at Baltimore, sailing to Mobile, Alabama, and from there to Odessa, Russia. George was in Odessa for nineteen days before VE Day. On the return trip, they stopped in Constanta, Romania, and Istanbul, Turkey, and then on to New York and to the Armed Guard Center, New Orleans.

From New Orleans he was attached to the SS E.R. Kemp to Corpus Christi, Texas, and back to New Orleans, and then to San Diego, California, and then to the Great Lakes Hospital.

George received an honorable discharge, January 13, 1946, GM 2/c.

He is married to Delores and they have four children, a son and three daughters. George is self-employed in retail gasoline, Roark's Amoco, Oneida Tennessee 37841.

VICTOR EUGENE ROBERT

Victor Eugene Robert was born in Yakima, Washington, where he went to school. He was drafted in December, 1943. Went into the Navy in February, 1944. Received boot training at Farragut, Idaho. Attended gunnery school at San Diego Destroyer Base. Attached to Armed Guard Center, Treasure Island. Sent to San Pedro, California, for his first ship, the SS New London (tanker) on June 29, 1944. He sailed to the South Pacific, India, and the Persian Gulf, going through the Panama Canal to the island of Aruba for resupply. Was detached and put on the SS William J. Riddle for leave in the States.



Victor Eugene Robert

After leave, was assigned to the SS Longview Victory (cargo). Sailed to the South Pacific Islands and ended up at Okinawa. Detached at the end of the war and was put on the SS Council Crest (tanker) until discharged at Bremerton, Washington, April 26, 1946.

After he was discharged, he attended the University of Washington for one year. The following year he joined his father and brother in the sheep and cattle operation. He married Martha Osowski in 1952, and they now have five sons and one daughter.

He is presently winding down his livestock operation and is looking forward to retirement. He resides at Vermita Star, Route Box 16, Sunnyside, Washington, 98944.

UNITED STATES NAVY ARMED GUARD WORLD WAR I AND II

The United States Navy Armed Guard was first organized during World War I when Allied and American shipping was being attacked by the enemy from surface ships and a new type of craft to warfare, the submarine. It was necessary for guns to be placed on ships and gun crews to man them for protection. The U.S. Navy was called on to supply the crew, and they were called, "Armed Guard."

Their main purpose was to maintain the guns and ammunition, protect the ship, its crew and precious cargo from the enemy with orders to fire the guns as long as the ship was afloat. This was to keep the enemy from crippling the ship, then boarding it for provisions they needed to stay on patrol longer. In previous engagements, the enemy had been known to kill the crew before sinking the ship.

The World War I Armed Guard was deactivated following the end of the war, after the guns were removed. They had served on 384 ships.

The Armed Guard crew consisted of the Officers, Gunners, Radiomen, Signalmen and later on, Medics and Radarmen. They were assisted by the Army and Merchant marine volunteers on many occasions, for their lives were at stake, too. The radiomen and signalmen were in charge of all codes and messages sent to and received aboard the ship. The Ship's Company Personnel at the Receiving Stations were almost as important as the gunners for without them there would not have been any "mail calls," clothing, or "good chow."

In April, 1941, with the war in Europe spreading over the boundaries of neighboring countries and another world conflict possible for the United States, measures were being taken to man the cargo ships again since the Allies had lost many ships since 1939. The MS City of Rayville was the first US Flag merchant ship lost during World War II. It struck an enemy mine, November 9, 1940, about six miles off Cape Orway, Australia. The SS Robin Moore, May 21, 1941, SS Steel Seafarer, September 7, 1941, SS Lehigh, October 19, 1941, SS Astral, December 2, 1941, and the SS Sagadahoc were all victims just days before Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. The SS Cynthia Olsen was sunk December 7, 1941, about 1830 GCT with thirty-three Merchant crew members and two soldier passengers. There were no survivors.

Even though the Allies were having many ships sunk during the 1940-41 era, Congress could not authorize placing guns aboard cargo ships due to the 1939 Neutrality Act, Section 6. This act prohibited the arming of US Merchant vessels during the existence of the proclamation of a state of war between foreign states or countries. It was not until the Act of November 17, 1941 (55-STAT.764), Section 2 for the Neutrality Act, that repealed Section 6, before steps were enacted to arm the Merchant ships. Training, however, was already in progress.

On April 15, 1941, men from several Naval Reserve units received gunnery training and were then sent home. Some 100 Reserve Officers also received special gun training during the summer at the Naval Academy for possible duty on board Merchant ships. On September 17, 1941, men arrived at Little Creek, Virginia, to begin gun crew training. It was a section Navy base in the swamps on U.S. Route 60, with only a mess hall, administration building and one barrack where guns were placed out back. From this the Armed Guard grew to 144,970 personnel before the war was to end. This was more than the entire fleet in 1935. These men were the first to man the few guns that were available at that time, and it was not before October 15, 1941, that the Little Creek base officially opened.

The first gun crews were numbered 1-E upwards. On November 18, most of the gun crews there were mustered out and sent to Brooklyn, New York, and were trained on 30 and 50 caliber guns until war was declared and on December 12, gun crew 7-E was assigned to the SS President Monroe. However, gun crew 1-E was the first to be assigned to a ship, the SS Dunboyne, December 2. The crew boarded December 5, for the first time to find that someone had flooded her magazine. The attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, caused another delay since the planes on deck had to be removed for different assignment. This gave the crew of the SS Larranga the distinction of being the first gunners to sail on an armed Merchant vessel and fire at an enemy submarine.

World War II brought a different type of war than World War I. Even

though the submarine had been used in World War I, they were greatly improved in range and firepower. They could stay under water longer and stalk their prey until all was in their favor. The casualty rates were high among the Armed Guard crew and Merchant Seamen due to the fact that the enemy ruled below sea with subs, on the sea with their superior ships and raiders, and above the sea with their fighters, bombers and torpedo planes. The subs began from our shorelines to the ship's destination. The raiders stayed, for the most part, in protective territory. The planes did their damage to the shipping whenever they came within flight range to ports whose destination was within this range, such as, from the English Channel to Russia's ports of Murmansk and Archangel. The enemy planes were a great menace for some time in the Mediterranean Sea until the U.S. gained control.

In 1944-45, the Armed Guard were introduced to "Jet Propulsion" with the "buzz bombs" aimed at the coast on both sides of the English Channel. Still, the crew was to come in contact with an even deadlier foe, the Kamikaze Pilot.

The Merchant Marine Chairman was quoted as saying, "If it was not for the Merchant shipping and seaman, the war would have been lost by the Allies." It could also be said, "If it were not for the United States Navy Armed Guard crews and the protection they provided, the ship, cargo and merchant crew lives would have been lost, and so would the war. You can be assured that it took the cooperation of all personnel of the peace loving countries, both civilian and military, doing their duty for mankind, to bring about peace and stability."

At the beginning of World War II, many Merchant ships were sunk within the lights of our shorelines since the light from the cities along the coast made a silhouette of our ships as they passed between the submarines and the glow from the shore. The coast of the Carolinas soon became called "Torpedo Alley" by the crews, since the ships looked like sitting ducks in a gallery. The owners of the businesses along the Eastern Seaboard were afraid they would lose customers if the lights were cut off, and it was only after official orders were they blacked out.

The requirement to serve in the Armed Guard was to be in good health in every respect for there were no doctors aboard. Good night vision was essential along with 20-20 vision. It was hoped that the men on watch could spot the enemy before the enemy spotted them, and that quick action could be taken to avoid contact.

Since many of the Armed Guard had never seen the ocean or even a large ship, they soon found themselves facing the hardship that their forefathers faced — strong wind, rough sea, bitter cold or extreme heat. But, their forefathers did not have to face an enemy with such destructive weapons. An enemy that had been taught to kill, and destroy the ship and cargo at any cost.

Early in the war, some of the ships were caught with no guns aboard. Many of the ships' crew placed creosote poles to appear as big guns. Guns were soon installed on ships going to priority destinations. The "Lewis" machine guns were soon replaced by 20 MM and the creosote poles by modern 3"50 and 5"38 guns.

The U.S. Navy Armed Guard crew were a dedicated crew of men with love for their country and the people of other countries, that wished to be self-governed. They soon gained respect from the enemy for their ability to perform the job as gunners.

Of the 6,236 Merchant ships the Armed Guard served on, 710 were sunk with many damaged. Of these were 2,710 famous "Liberty Ships," with 216 sunk. Over 80,000 of the original Armed Guard were transferred into the fleet as the "Battle of the Atlantic" slowed and the need for experienced gun crews were needed in the Pacific Theatre of war. There was a big demand for experienced gunners on the LSTs and LCLs, for invasions that were to come. Many were placed aboard the larger ships as relief replacements.

The Armed Guard branch of service was again de-activated as soon as World War II was over and all guns were removed. Many of the crews shipped over to the regular Navy, making a career of the service until retirement. Most returned to the place from whence they came; the farms, factories, schools, service stations, to the country, small towns and big cities to be engulfed back into society to soon become the "Forgotten Heroes." A conflict that had taken men to almost every port in the world and 1,810 to their final resting place.

THE ARMED GUARD SERVICE

With the German forces overrunning Europe and most of Russia, England was to be the next to fall without more help from the United States of America. Only did the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor awaken our people to the fact that our own security was threatened as never before. To help them, it would be necessary to move large numbers of men and vast amounts of supplies across the oceans that were mostly controlled by submarines, raiders and planes of the enemy. Therefore, the Maritime Commission was called on for their ships to carry the burden of delivering the supplies overseas through submarine infested waters. Plans were carried out by the Chief of Naval Operations and the Maritime Shipping Administration and it was decided that the Navy would supply the guns and men to protect the ship, cargo and merchant seamen. The Merchant Seamen were to handle the ship as before the war, except, they were under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Navy which delegated the authority of making decisions to Bureaus and Agencies in the Naval establishment.

The Bureau of Authority was known as "Op-231" and they formulated doctrines and issued directives. They kept the file and records and worked to improve training and to standardize all procedures of the Armed Guard service. It worked to overcome the shortage of guns and trained personnel, and approved or rejected the many devices needed for Armed Guard duties. "Op-231" was always on the alert to catch mistakes and detect new trends in warfare to improve safety of the Armed Guard throughout World War II.

The Bureau of Ships and the Bureau of Ordnance supplied the guns and equipment for the defense of merchant ships while the Maritime Commission, under the direction of Defense Installations on Merchant Ships, has the responsibility for the installation of items of defense. The Port Directors were in charge of day-by-day routine to see that each ship which left port was properly armed, equipped and manned with Armed Guard. They also arranged for necessary repairs, replenishment of materials and transfer of the Armed Guard personnel and handled their complaints or grievances.

A vast network of training establishments prepared the Armed Guard for the duty they were to perform and three basic Armed Guard Schools for most of World War II were located at Little Creek, Virginia (later to Camp Shelton, September, 1943), San Diego, California and Gulfport, Mississippi. Training was at Chicago, Illinois, until Gulfport School was opened in the fall of 1942. The Chicago facility closed because winter conditions on the Great Lakes was not suitable for training purposes. There was anti-aircraft gun training near each Armed Guard School. These ranges were Dam Neck, Virginia, Shell Beach, Louisiana, Point Montara, California and Pacific Beach, Washington. Refresher training schools, especially in anti-aircraft, were set up at Lido Beach, New York, Shell Beach, Louisiana, Point Montara, California and Pacific Beach, Washington, away from civilian population.

Armed Guard personnel were assigned to three Armed Guard Centers. These were located at Brooklyn, New York (1st Avenue — 52nd Street — East Coast), New Orleans, Louisiana (Gulf Coast) and Treasure Island (West Coast). Through these, the men were assigned to ships. These centers handled records, mail, and payroll along with administering discipline, furnishing recreation, health, legal problems, additional training, storing of seabags for those on leave plus the many other duties too numerous to mention.

Smaller schools were set up at different locations, stateside and on foreign soil. The Bureau of Aeronautics set up "synthetic" training devices and before the war was over, a man could enter a gunnery school and could experience all realities of combat, except getting injured. This included firing at a screen in 3-D in simulated aerial attack by the enemy, and it would score a hit if you were on target.

Outstanding officers were called to Washington, D.C., to explain the latest tactic of the enemy after returning from areas of actual combat. Many of these were made instructors in the schools. In no branch of Naval Service was combat experience more emphasized than in the Armed Guard. Their primary purpose was to train in shooting at planes and submarines but they also taught seamanship, navigation, fire fighting, plane recognition plus the many other lessons they felt that a man should know before he was to face the circumstance of survival.

Many defense installations were tried during World War II. Degaussing the ships against magnetic mines and smoke floats for hiding ships from

view of the attacking planes were the most successful besides the guns. Kites and barrage balloons, with their wire string cables, were used to some success against low flying planes but, in many cases they proved to be a deterrent factor as well by getting shot down and fouling the ships' propellers. Even special gun foundations and armor protection gun shields, life saving equipment, magazines for storing ammunition were important defense items. Facilities to blackout every ray of light were provided and many others as self experience from combat was relayed and compiled.

During World War II, over 7,000,000 Army and more than 141,000 civilian personnel were transported overseas under wartime conditions. They were carried over on Army and Navy troopships and many were carried on the Merchant ships, some aboard ammunition ships, one such ship, the SS Paul Hamilton. She was torpedoed April 20, 1944, off the Algerian coast while en route from Norfolk, Virginia, to Bizerte, Tunisia, in Convoy UGS-38 with a complement of forty-seven Merchant Seamen, twenty-nine Armed Guard and 504 U.S. Army Force Personnel. She was loaded with high explosives. After the smoke cleared, there was no debris and no survivors.

When the war was over, the Army and Navy transports and the Merchant ships were used to bring troops home and the Armed Guard stayed aboard until such time was found to remove the guns, ammunition and the apparatus assigned to them by the Navy "Op-231." The cost of the Armed Guard operation during World War II was estimated at above \$2,000,000,000. This was a small price to pay for their service performed since the 6,236 ships they protected cost \$22,500,000,000 to build and operate. Plus the cargo which the Armed Guard defended cannot be estimated in dollars. The greatest value of "FREEDOM" that they helped preserve and the suffering they endured can never be put in the bank or on paper, but is laid up among the Archives of Destiny that they fought, not to be "Conquerors," but to be "Free."

BROOKLYN ARMED GUARD CENTER

The Naval Reserve Armory at 52nd Street and 1st Avenue, South Brooklyn, New York, was commissioned on May 20, 1941, as a Navy Receiving Station. It was used to accommodate the crews of British vessels undergoing repairs in local shipyards. On November 18, 1941, the first United States Navy Armed Guard Officers and men arrived from Little Creek, Virginia, for on November 10, 1941, the Receiving Station had been established as an Armed Guard Center by the Bureau of Navigations (BuNav) for the Atlantic coast.

The story of the Armed Guard Center (Atlantic) was one of rapid expansion and became one of the largest military commands in the Navy. Matters were run on a day-by-day basis, but no ship missed a sailing date without Armed Guard crews.

The Center even trained 500 men sent directly from the recruiting stations, gave them three weeks recruit training and three weeks Armed Guard training. The Center operated around the clock. Calls for gun crews could come anytime, day or night. Other Navy personnel, including the British were at the Center until late in 1942.

By March, 1944, 47,000 men and 2,800 officers were attached with a payroll of over \$2,000,000 a month. Over 5,000 men were fed each day, 1000 receiving "leave" papers a week. The Ship's Service Store served about 7,500 per day and over 1,100 personnel ran the Center. By November, 1944, 59,062 men were attached to the Center. By the middle of 1945, the process of shifting "tried" veterans of the war in the Atlantic and Mediterranean to New Orleans and Treasure Island for further assignment in the Pacific, was customary.

Some indication as to the contact the Center personnel had with the realities of war comes from the records of personnel attached. By June, 1945, some 505 ships carrying Armed Guard crews had sunk with a loss of 76 officers and 1,330 men. Survivors from the sinkings totalled 412 officers and 7,679 men. Records for all of these had to be processed and survivors re-assigned to rest camps, leave or back to another ship. The "Huntington Estate" at Haverstraw, New York, was used as a rest camp site until September 2, 1944, when all were sent to the Deland, Florida, rest camp due to better weather conditions.

In July, 1942, the USS Newton was obtained and used for a barrack for 600 men and later as a brig and was taken out of service in late 1945. The

total Armed Guard personnel from December 7, 1941 to September 30, 1945, was 144,970 manning 53,272 guns.

The Brooklyn Armed Guard Center was commanded by William J. Coakley, Commanding Officer, from its inception in November, 1941, until his retirement on April 6, 1945. Commander Coakley was born in Brooklyn. He was replaced by Commander Reinhardt C. Moureau, a native of Lake Forest, Illinois.

The Center published their own magazine — The Pointer — every two weeks.

Many things could be written about the Armed Guard personnel and their stay there. Most memories would return to the sites of tall buildings, the proficiency of the subway system, Times Square, Jack Dempsey's Bar, Radio City Music Hall and others, but more especially the Grand Old Lady of them all, the Statue of Liberty that greeted the crews when they returned home safely.

NEW ORLEANS ARMED GUARD CENTER

"NOLA" was the short name given to this Center, under the command of Lieutenant Commander C.T. Martoglio. A letter from the Bureau of Navigation dated February 28, 1942, directed the Commandant of the Eighth Naval District to establish, as soon as practical, and as a separate activity under the Receiving Station, New Orleans, a Center to be designated as the Armed Guard Center, Receiving Station (Algiers) New Orleans, Louisiana. The Center was commissioned March 12, 1942.

The purpose of the Center was to provide at one central location, facilities for receiving, berthing, messing, equipping and training men in the Naval Service assigned to duty as Armed Guard gun crews on Merchant ships. A program of training was begun in June, 1942, in an enlisted barrack which was equipped with one 20 MM, one .50 caliber and two .30 caliber guns. Transient officers with combat experience were assigned to instructional work for brief periods between voyages.

It was not uncommon in those days for a man to board his ship in the morning and be a survivor in the evening, his ship having suffered the fate of what had become "Torpedo Junction" right outside the nets of the harbor. Of course, this had become a problem at all seaport towns. On September 23, 1944, the name of the U.S. Naval Station was changed to the U.S. Naval Repair Base, New Orleans, Louisiana.

The "NOLA" Center eventually grew into thirty-eight buildings and capable of handling more than 1,500 men. In December, 1944, 250 officers and 4,000 men were assigned and detached with over 110,000 men being placed on ships in World War II.



Waves stationed at Armed Guard Pacific, Treasure Island, 1945.



Ship's Company, Finance, USN Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn, 1945-46.



TREASURE ISLAND ARMED GUARD CENTER

The Armed Guard Center at Treasure Island was established by Com 12 on December 19, 1941, in compliance with a Bureau of Navy Directive on November 15, 1941. Treasure Island was to perform the same functions performed by the other Armed Guard Centers. On June 2, 1942, the Center was designated as a Command with a Commanding Officer.

Like other Armed Guard facilities, they had to expand from zero to reach peak capacity of personnel of 46,817 on June 2, 1945. The Center had personnel on board 2,106 vessels. The men had to be cared for like those of the other Centers and Waves took over the duties of men as gunnery instructors in many cases. The monthly general supplies totaled over \$250,000 and during the forty-six months period from January 1, 1941, to November 1,

1945, the Center paid \$69,468,800 to personnel.

By the middle of 1945, the process of shifting battle tired veterans from the Atlantic to the Pacific Center in the buildup for the Japanese invasion was well underway. Many of the crew were trained in Seattle, Washington, San Diego, California, Farragut, Idaho, and many more places, too numerous to mention. Treasure Island was used for the 1939 World's Fair and many of the buildings were used during World War II by the Armed Guard crew.

Memory of the Golden Gate Bridge, the "Liberty" in San Francisco and riding the famous cable cars gave the crew something to come home to. Through the gates of Treasure Island passed some of the bravest men to ever go to war. To all of Them, America and the World owes Them a debt of gratitude.



Lone Sailor

U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL
Washington, D.C.

DEDICATION



To the Officers and Men who sailed the ships of
World War II,
especially to those who lost their lives, and to
their families.

THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS 8TH NATIONAL REUNION WILL BE HELD JUNE 21-25, 1989 AT THE RED LION "SEATACINN", 18740 PACIFIC HIGHWAY SOUTH, SEATTLE, WA. 98188, LOCAL TELEPHONE 206-246-8600, OTHER 1-800-547-8010. PLEASE LET THEM KNOW IT'S FOR THE ARMED GUARD REUNION WHEN MAKING RESERVATIONS. YOUR HOSTESS: MADELYN RIGG, 1623 S.W. 166TH, SEATTLE, WA. 98166, 1-206-242-9293.



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