

USS WILHOITE

DE-DER 397

NEWSLETTER

JULY, AUG, SEPT 2022



Shipmates and Wives:

I only had one person answer to the quiz and that was Bill Owens. Had one other person said she was sending hers so I hope that I get it before I send this out. You have another one for you to think about. The same holds true. If you answer all right, you have a choice of \$25.00 GC or something made from House of Webster (made in Arkansas).

Still waiting on responses on next year's reunion. If we have it in Newport, those traveling will have the same problem as in Branson. No flights directly in. Have to be in Portland, Oregon or Seattle, Washington and I believe that would be further. We will have a vote taken at business meeting in Branson. We have hats ordered and also shirts. When we get them I will send out a notice.

Heard from shipmates that want to hear from others, so send me information on family, navy days and what you have been doing since getting out of navy. We had a couple last newsletter and we have 3 this time. They are very interesting.

Here's hoping we will hear from some more



"Smooth Sailing"

Liz



Charitable donations from shipmates

Alcor Mike and Dana

Baker Billy

Berry David

Bunker Rita

Caldwell John and Brenda

Candor Raymond

Compton Ed

Cusato Paul and Sharon

Dougher Thomas

Dutchuk John

Al Dyson

Frederiksen Geri

Gennetti Fred

Gergens Steve

Hagee Charles

Hawes Eugene

Heller Richard

Horch Linda

Huml Vincent

Hydro John

Johnson Robert

Knight James

Layton Geoffrey

Long Leroy

Markley Ray

Mauldin Connie

McKallagat Peter

Morlock Fred

Morrissey Tom

Mullin James

Murphy Obie

Owens William and Marilyn

Parker David

Payne Gary

Payson David & Mina

Payton Johnny

Elisabeth Rider

Pohl Art and Judi

Robinson Lee

Rott Raymond and Donna

Ruel Donald A.

Scheeder Richard and Joyce

Shanahan, Jr. John and Joyce

Shuck Donald L.

Smith Raymond

Thompson Ross and Cindy

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Valiant Martha

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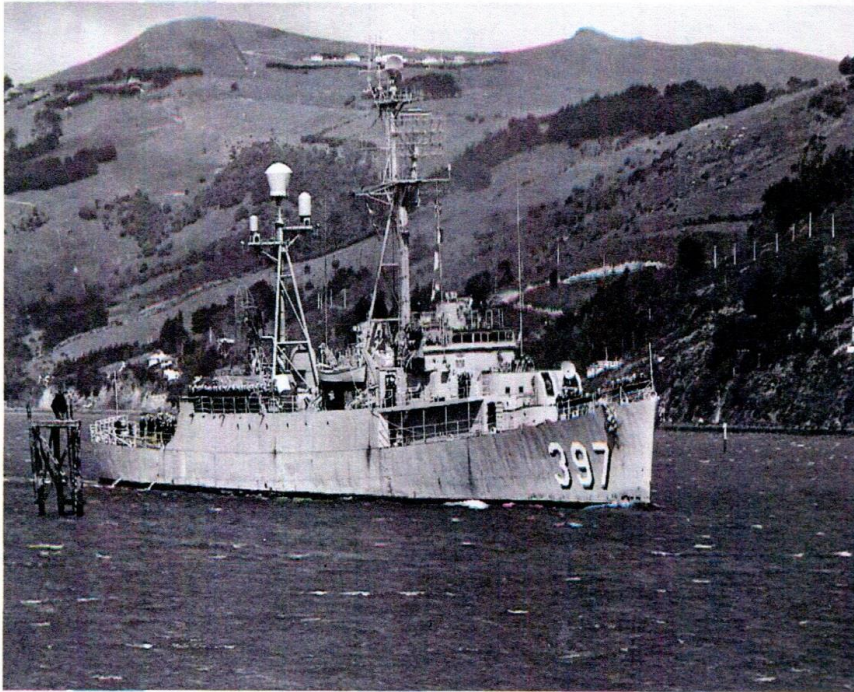
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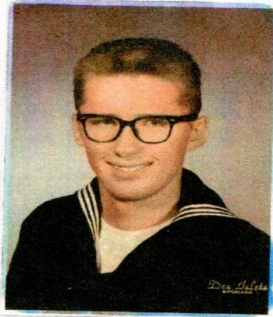
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SHIPMATES NEWS



GO NAVY



ART POHL

Art was aboard the USS Wilhoite for two years - The ship was stationed at Pier 91, Seattle, Washington. We were part of the Distant Early Warning system. This was in the 1950's. I first started in First Division, deck division. In high school I took typing because my handwriting was terrible. This proved to be a boon later in the Navy.

After several months in First Division I was transferred to Second Division, Gunnery Division. I now was Gunnery Yeoman/First Lieutenant Stores. Had my own office and storeroom. Still had to stand watches in port and at sea. About a year and a half later we were transferred to Pearl Harbor. Coming of a patrol we stopped at Midway Island to take on fuel, we had Liberty. So I went ashore, wandered around, went to the PX-As I went back aboard the ship and I was told by the Officer of the Deck that I was something like A.W.O.L., Me? Well nothing ever came of it. Our ships complement was approximately 175 personnel, we all knew each other.

Working as Gunnery Yeoman, one day I was looking thru some ships books and discovered we were allotted a .30 caliber machine gun. I forwarded this information to our Gunnery Officer, Lt. McGrath. We eventually received the machine gun. We were out at sea, the Lt. stopped by, picked up two belts of ammunition, slung them around his neck, turned his service cap sideways on his head, said "come on Pohl". The Lt. went charging into the wardroom swinging one end of the ammo belt, shouting "Veva La Castro" several times with a lowly Seaman behind him, me. We had a great bunch of Officers and Enlisted men aboard.

While on patrol cruising at about five knots, we would always be on "glass ball lookout". These were the glassballs that broke loose from fishing nets. There was a list of personnel in the wheelhouse base on seniority as to who would get a glass ball. I finally received one, a nice one about 14 inches in diameter.. It was a good tour of duty that I will always remember. Dick Scheeder was one of our Officers at that time. Then there is the Sitka Cruise but that is a story for another time. Oh and the Lake Washington family cruise.

INFORMATION ON KENNETH HARRIS

This note is from Kenneth Harris who served aboard the USS Wilhoite from 1954 until 1957. I graduated high school in the spring of 1954, at the age of 17. Was sworn into the Navy in August 1954. I was sent to Bainbridge, MD for Boot Camp.

After 13 weeks of boot camp a large group of us were put on a train for Charleston, SC. Very few schools offered due to large number of discharges since end of Korean war. Most went to fill man shortages in fleet. Our assignment was the USS Wilhoite, which was still being refitted since being in mothballs since end of WWII. We were part of the recommissioning crew along with a lot of career people finishing out their last few of their 20 years for retirement. Many left over from WWII. Us younging's got a great education without any diplomas!!!!

When the ship came out of the yard us apprentices were all assigned jobs. Some deck, some gunnery, some communication, etc. We were all green as grass but somehow the Wilhoite was able to survive. The Wilhoite was recommissioned went to Norfolk, VA to be accepted into the Atlantic Fleet and then went to Guantanamo Beach, Cuba for about 3 months training. Part way thru training we had a ship's party on the beach. Half one day half the next. We were allotted so many cases of beer for each day. Each day a "young" Ensign was sent along to buy the beer and supervise. My half was mostly old career people who had been there before and knew the ropes. Along with the popular brands they told the ensign to get two cases of "Hatucy" a Cuban beer. Little did he know it came in a banana crate 120 bottles each crate. Fun by ALL!!!

After returning to Charleston, SC yard for touch up and repairs we received orders for West Coast. Left Charleston went down thru Panama Canal and up to San Diego, CA to be accepted into the Pacific Fleet. From there to Pier 51 Seattle, WA our home port and a great city.

We would go out to sea for 2 to 3 weeks at a time and run a picket line to watch for unidentified ships and aircrafts on radar. It was called the DEW Line. After time at sea we returned to Seattle and tied up to pier 51 for two weeks and then went out daily for training for two weeks, then back to picket line. Just about like shore duty.

I served my full enlistment on the Wilhoite. Got off when they sailed for Pearl Harbor. I helped throw off the bow line when they sailed. Wonderful 3 1/2 years. I am now 86 years old and not many of the recommissionary crew left. My rank at discharge was GMM3.

After discharge I went to work in the Pennsylvania steel mills and retired at age 62. Slowed down but still moving. He wishes he could attend reunion but his health will not let him.

FRED GENETTI


Fred was in the navy 4 years, came out as E5. It was suggested I extend for 6 months to make E6 but I did not. I was on 4 ships in 4 years. USS Observaction Island - top secret. We tested Polaris missiles while I waited for a school. After school I went to USS Topeka (saw VN for 1st time). Made E4 was sent to USS Provedence, another cruiser (VN again), made E5 was sent to the USS Wilhoite to be in charge of IC room (again VN). Shellback 4 times.

I saw many many ports that I should have explored but most are barrooms. I never saw the memorials on Hawaii - too much partying.

When I got out, couple of odd jobs, then school again. I went into business in 1977 as a self employed electrician and A/C and refrigeration. Was not doing enough A/C so just electrical untill 2010.

Had a stroke, lost my whole right side, couldn't speak, so major. I was lucky. Brain surgery in 2012 and was bad for 4-5 years. I retired after stroke.

Still married, no children. Bought a house in Bedford, MA in 1979. Bought a 2 bedroom cottage on Newfound Lake, NH in 1983, now the only original owner. I now have a 16 foot boat and a whole bunch of fishing equipment. I recently took up 22 bendhrest a lot of fun but very confusing and expensive to do it right.



Every day is a new
beginning. Take
a deep breath,
smile and start
again.

The answers to last quiz In April May and June Newsletter
Winners were William Owens, Cindy Thompson and John Dutchuk

Name one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends. Answer is Boxing.

What famous Northamerican Landmark is constantly moving backward?
Answer. Niagara Falls

Of all vegetables, only two can be live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
Answer: Asparagas and Rhubarb

What fruit has seeds on the outside:
Answer: Strawberries

In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and is ripe, and the bottle is genuine; It hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
Answer: It grew inside the bottle

Only three words in standard English language begin with the letters 'dw' and they are all common words. Name two of them.
Answer: Dwarf, Dwell and Dwindle

There re 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name all of them?
Answer: Period, comma, colon, semicolon, dah, hyphen, apostrophe, question mark, exclamation point, quotation marks, bradkets, parenthesis, braces, and ellipses.

Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any form except fresh.
Answer: Lettuce

Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter 'S'.
Answers: Socks, Slippers, snow shoes, sandals, stockings, snow boots, sneakers, skates, skies, scuba flippers

Snippets of Recollection - Market Time - Viet Nam

by Eric Mittwer - RM3 1964-1966

As you all know time has a way of "adjusting" ones memory, but the way I'm telling this one is just as I remember it. There are details and incidences which occurred during the same moments so those of you who were there, please fill in the blanks and correct my "adjustments."

I recall on one occasion, we had pulled about five or six hundred yards outside of a coastal cove where there was a small village. We went about our usual inspections using the motor whale boat. Nothing exciting, but that night, I went up to the bridge and took a peek through the night vision scope. HOLY COW we were surrounded by sampans, dozens of them scattered every where. Turns out they were night fishing. Nothing came of it and we were at relaxed GQ but the thought of them gave me chills. Early the next morning I ran up to the bridge again. This time the night vision scope had been replaced with a long glass (telescope). I looked through it and saw people walking out on a small peninsula. Some stayed standing and some squatted. Since the squatting position is common I couldn't tell if they were just looking at us or what. I later learned that it was their latrine. The tide washes it for them. What a surprise!

Later that morning we moved in a little closer for the usual inspections. I was on flag bridge duty wearing one of those dumb looking extra large hard hats and head phones. All of a sudden I heard "We're being shot at"! I looked over and couldn't see anyone in the boat. They had all ducked down and were heading back to Wilhoite. We quickly weighed anchor and as soon as the boat crew was aboard with what was the fastest lift I'd ever seen, we turned slightly starboard and let loose over the port bow with the forward 3 inch. There was a hillside with a small shack and we'd seen people going up and down to and from it from time to time. That was our target. From my vantage point I could actually see the rounds fly toward the shack. Well, after about three or four rounds the gun jammed with no hits, but at least one near miss. We were about to turn to our aft guns when our Vietnamese Liaison officer came running up to the bridge yelling stop, stop, that a Buddhist shrine...So much for artillery. Oh yes, there was only one shot fired from shore, but close enough that the boat crew heard it whiz by and see the splash. And the reason he was so late in warning the captain was that he was on the boat.

Page 2 of Snippet by Eric Mittwer

That night after pulling back out to a safe distance, we heard a report that there was a fire fight just outside the village. The Captain notified the ground forces of our location and if they needed help and requested permission to fire flares over the village if it would do any good. The night was pitch black and as we proceeded closer, the sky filled with one flare after the next every few seconds, the night began to look as eerie as in the movies with the flares coming down under their parachutes, light filtering through the tree tops and casting strange moving shadows. We could see the flash of explosions and small arms fire just past the village. From our location we could just hear the thump of the explosions. Bright flashes then moments later "thump, thump". As the night became still, I heard on the radio some light crackling static then something like "thanks for the help". My chest sorta puffed out about then and felt a huge sense of pride.... **GO WILHOITE!**

AND EVERY HOUR OF EVERY DAY, THEY KEEP THEIR WATCH IN HELL.
FOR IF THE FIRES EVER FAIL THEIR SHIPS A USELESS SHELL.

WHEN SHIPS CONVERGE TO HAVE A WAR UPON AN ANGRY SEA,
THE MEN BELOW JUST GRIMLY SMILE AT WHAT THEIR FATE MIGHT BE.
THEY'RE LOCKED BELOW, LIKE MEN FORE DOOMED, WHO HEAR NO BATTLE CRY.
IT'S WELL ASSUMED THAT IF THEY'RE HIT THE MEN BELOW WILL DIE.

FOR EVERY DAY'S A WAR DOWN THERE, WHEN GAUGES ALL READ RED,
TWELVE HUNDRED POUNDS OF HEATED STEAM, CAN KILL YOU MIGHTY DEAD.
SO IF YOU EVER WRITE THEIR SONS, OR TRY TO TELL THEIR TALE,
THE VERY WORDS SHOULD MAKE YOU HEAR A FIRED FURNACE WAIL.

THESE "MEN OF STEEL" THE PUBLIC NEVER GETS TO KNOW,
SO LITTLE'S HEARD ABOUT THE PLACE, THAT SAILORS CALL "THE HOLE".
BUT I CAN SING ABOUT THIS PLACE, AND TRY TO MAKE YOU SEE,
THE HARDENED LIFE OF MEN DOWN THERE, CAUSE ONE OF THEM IS ME.

I'VE SEEN THESE SWEAT SOAKED HEROS FIGHT, IN SUPERHEATED AIR,
TO KEEP THEIR SHIP ALIVE AND RIGHT, THOUGH NO ONE KNOWS THEY'RE THERE.
AND THUS THEY'LL FIGHT FOR AGES ON, 'TIL STEAMSHIPS SAIL NO MORE,
AMID THE BOILER'S MIGHTY HEAT AND TURBINE'S HELLISH ROAR.

SO WHEN YOU SEE A SHIP PULL OUT TO MEET A WARSHIP FOE
REMEMBER FAINTLY, IF YOU CAN, "THE MEN WHO SAIL BELOW".

Engineer's Lament

What may you ask is life at sea? Speak to seaman and not to me,
A dial a gauge and nothing more, Except the engines roar,
No sunset turning the ocean red, Just bed to watch and watch to bed,
No deep and rolling ocean smell, Just a foul and dirty oily smell,
No watching the low set ocean aboil, Just temperature, pressure, vacuum and oil,
No thought how neat and trim your craft, Just count your turns and check your shaft,
No fresh air to salt your blood, Just a cigarette and a cup of mud,
If you must go to sea, lend me your ear-----

Don't let them make you an **ENGINEER!**

Radars School

by Dave Payson 1964-68

It was a typical summer day in San Francisco, July 1964— cloudless cobalt blue sky, sailboats tacking in a brisk wind on the bay, skyscrapers and bridges standing out in sharp relief, framing the scene. Nowadays, you'd pay probably a million dollars a year for a view like that from your million-dollar condo. But back in '64, it was ours for the price of a navy billet. On the day I write about here, several of us were hanging around the barracks—actually, we were sitting at a picnic table outside of it—too broke to go into the City by the Bay, even though most of us had weekend liberty. We were at Treasure Island—or "TI," as we called it—in San Francisco Bay, attending "Class A" Radar School, learning our future trade in the Navy, which was to be radar men on fleet ships.

Without money or family or friends in the city, we had decided to stay at the base to catch up on our studies. Besides, misery loves company, as they say, and we were all in this together—to pass radar school and get out to the fleet. At the ripe old age of nineteen, I was a "salt" amongst this bunch, because I had already been out to the fleet as a crewman aboard the USS Midway, CVA-41, for six months, making one West-Pac cruise to the Orient. (They called it "Pre-school Indoctrination," which was when you went directly from boot camp to a ship for half a year or so before reporting to whatever training they had lined you up for.) Most of my radar classmates were fresh out of boot camp. But "salt" or not, I was about halfway through my course work by then and struggling with some of the basic concepts of electricity and radio signals. Most difficult for me to grasp was Ohm's Law, which stated simply: $V = I \times R$ —V standing for voltage, I for current, and R for resistance. Learning Ohm's Law, I knew from my instructor's lectures, was at the very heart of understanding the principles of how radar worked.

But on this sun-struck afternoon in the early 60s, I was having trouble grasping the concept. That was when, I recall, the radio, which had been playing "Sugar Shack," the number-one pop hit in the country at the time, had cut in with a news bulletin, distracting my already wandering attention span on the workings of radar technology. In a distant country called Vietnam, in a place called the Gulf of Tonkin, North Vietnamese gunboats had attacked the U.S. destroyer Maddox, the radio announcer said. The Maddox had returned fire and sank two of the gunboats. When the report was over "Sugar Shack" resumed playing right where it had left off. We looked at each other, contemplating what we had just heard. "They better not mess with us," I remember one of my radar classmates saying, breaking the silence that had fallen over us at the table as we mulled over the radio report. The rest of us nodded in agreement, pondering for a brief moment what this naval skirmish in a distant country might mean to us down the road. And then we put it out of our minds and resumed our lazy day, land-locked sailors surrounded by an impressive body of water called San Francisco Bay.

YOUR NEXT QUIZ - A LITTLE ABOUT EVERYTHING - GOOD LUCK

Get at least 8 of these right and you will receive a \$25.00 GC or something from House of Webster (made in Arkansas)

- 1. Alongside former President Frederik Willem de Klerk, which then President of South Africa won a Nobel prize for their work to peacefully and apart held in the country?**
- 2. How many cards are there in a pack of cards (not incl.jokers)?**
- 3. What Saints Day is celebrated (particularly in Ireland) on 17th March each year?**
- 4. What animal is Pumbaa in he Lion King?**
- 5. What is the largest country by area in the world?**
- 6. In which country would you find Angel Falls, the highest waterfall on earth?**
- 7. Patrick Mahomes became the first half a billion-dollar player when he signed a 10-year deal for the Kansas City Chief, but what sport was that in?**
- 8. Which is larger the Pacific or the Atlantic Ocean?**
- 9. Dubbed the "King of Pop", which Artist released the album Thriller, which went on to be the bestselling album of all time?**
- 10. Which famous US singer was born in Tupelo, Mississippi in 1935 and died in 1977 in Graceland, Tennessee?**
- 11. Frasier, the multi-award-winning TV show was set in which US city?**
- 12. What is the main-non-alcoholic ingredient of a White Russian Cocktail?**
- 13. What coloured vegetable is now mainly orange but can also be purple and yellow?**
- 14. What is main ingredient of bread?**
- 15. What is the largarest mammal currently inhabiting the earth?**
- 16. What does the second amendment of the US Constitution state?**
- 17. There are five colors of the Olympic Rings? What are they?**