

USS RANKIN NEWS

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AKA-103

1945-1947

1952-1968

LKA-103

1969-1971

GOLD E

1960-1961

HAIL AND FAREWELL

We welcome these new members since our last newsletter:

James M. Benison
Charles A. Bourbeau
Claude A. Combs
William D. Conway
Gary J. Erickson
Robert A. Garpstas
Layton L. Harvey
Leland E. Holly
Alan W. Knudten
Johnnie E. Moore
H. E. Northrop
Ronald Sirois
Herbert O. Webster
Joseph C. Zachar

We regret to inform you of these deaths during the same period:

Elmer "Ike" Auer
Homar H. Hall, Jr.
Harold P. Rupp
Rudolph T. Sommer
Donald P. Trepte



This is our first newsletter since July, and we hope you think it's a good one. We want it to bring happiness to your holidays, and the best of luck during 2007. And of course we want it to remind you of the happy times you spent with your friends from the USS Rankin.

Not only does this piece of paper bring you good wishes, but it includes some souvenirs from holidays long past, not to mention a report on our reunion and a list of newly-found former shipmates.

Up to now, newsletters have been problematic for us. We like to send them out, and most members like to get them, but they're very expensive to do. Right now, it costs about \$800 to print and mail one to everybody on our mailing list, which consists of well over 1,200 names.

But in January we'll have a nonprofit bulk mail permit, which will give us considerable savings on postage (17 cents for up to three ounces. vs. the 39 cents we're paying for one ounce right now). And we've just acquired a printer that lets us print them in this larger and better size. During 2007, we plan to send four newsletters—one each in

March, June, September, and December. We hope you'll like them.

FINDING SHIPMATES

One of our biggest challenges is finding the 2,400 Rankin sailors who we haven't been in touch with yet. A month ago we started a project to find more of them, and so far it's had excellent results. We use the Internet to find people with names and ages that match our unfound former shipmates, then we work that list by telephone and mail. It has been going well so far, but we've just scratched the surface on finding all our people.

If there's somebody you'd especially like to find, just let us know and we'll put him at the top of our target list. We need to know his name (properly spelled, if possible), his rate, and when he was aboard.

CONFIDENTIAL



641-45 U. S. Navy Yard, S. C., 2 March 1945.
U. S. S. RANKIN (AKA 103), Starboard Quarter, Down View.





2006 Reunion Review

The USS Rankin Association's third annual reunion was held September 21-24, 2006 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA. By every standard this was a great reunion, attended by fifty-one shipmates and thirty-one spouses or other guests.

The reunion officially kicked off on Thursday the 21st, but several shipmates arrived a day or two early to see some of the attractions that were not on the reunion agenda. The registration desk and hospitality room opened mid-morning on Thursday and remained open the remainder of the day. Throughout the day the arrivals picked up their registration packets and room key, and then headed for the hospitality room. The first planned event was the welcome reception held at 4:30 PM. Here everyone gathered for the informal introductions, hors d'oeuvres, and a cash bar. Shortly after the reception a group boarded two motor coaches for an evening cruising and dining on the Potomac River. From all reports, it was a very pleasant evening.

Friday began with a private continental breakfast. Shortly thereafter, the guides and buses arrived for a Washington city tour. Arlington National Cemetery was the first stop. A fully narrated tram tour of the cemetery acquainted the group with the history, customs, and traditions of this famous American landmark. The tram stopped

at the Kennedy grave sites, where the former President, his wife Jackie and son are buried. Off to the side is the grave of Robert Kennedy.

The highlight of the visit had to be the opportunity to observe the famed Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The final stop on the Arlington tour was at the Robert E. Lee House. Many of us were not aware that he (Robert E. Lee) once owned the house and property that is now the National Cemetery. Last stop on the tour was at the World War II Memorial. "Awe inspiring" are the words that come to mind, but that seems so inadequate to describe the sacrifices of that group of veterans. Their monument should serve to remind all of us that Freedom is Not Free.

From the memorial it was back to the Marriott for some rest and relaxation in the hospitality room, and to check on new arrivals. Meanwhile, back in the hotel, those new arrivals



anxiously waited for the tour to return. When the bus pulled up and the tourists disembarked, the lobby was filled with loud voices greeting each other.

The Friday evening social hour began at 1800 somewhat quietly (but that didn't last long). Apparently a lot of the world's problems were solved during this hour.

At 1900 the tone changed, it was time to eat. The dinner buffet was superb, and if anyone left hungry it was their own fault. Food was ample and a

good variety. Skip Sander had a few remarks reminding everyone of Saturday's schedule and many of the group retired to the hospitality room to continue the evening's fellowship. It must be noted, however, that some retired to the "Adult Beverage Dispensing Center" for additional refreshments.

Saturday began with a continental breakfast followed by the annual business meeting. The location of next year's reunion will be announced early in 2007.

One of the highlights of the reunion was Saturday's tour of the White House followed by the memorial service at the Navy Memorial. As can be expected in Washington, not everything went according to plan. The first challenge was an unexpected roadblock "protecting" a street demonstration. This, of course, caused a glitch that was quickly solved by "de-bussing" and walking to the White House Visitor's Center and reassembling outside there for the march to the White House. Since it had been necessary to forward an advance attendee list to White House Security, we had to line up alphabetically to be checked off the list. This should have worked well in theory, but the list that was provided was not alphabetical—it was in the order people had registered. Ahhhh, the best laid plans! In a story far too long and complicated to recount here, we did lose one couple to White House Security (HINT: Mr. Zimmer was glowing red from a recent nuclear medicine exam). But, they magically appeared at the Navy Memorial, no worse for the wear. On a serious note, the White House tour was excellent. Although the group was only able to see those rooms designated to be open, one did leave with a sense of pride.

The final stop of the day was at the Navy Memorial for the memorial ser-

vice and wreath laying ceremony. With the assistance of the US Navy Memorial Foundation staff a most impressive service was conducted by members of the USS Rankin reunion group. Participants included Chairman Skip Sander; Chaplain Capt H. Edward Miller, Jr., USNR (Ret); Executive Board members John Feeley and Jill Breslau, daughter of shipmate Max Breslau; and Norma Jane Haney, widow of shipmate William C. Haney. An Honor Guard and bugler were provided by the Navy Memorial Foundation.

After returning to the hotel, it was time to shine, shave, shower, shampoo, and make one's self banquet ready. The banquet was, of course, the "big show". The evening began with a social hour which livened up the crowd. The more formal activities began with the playing of Anchors Aweigh as the "attention-getter." The National Anthem, Pledge of Allegiance, and Invocation officially opened the banquet. Following a few welcome remarks by Skip Sander, dinner was served. After dinner, the raffle winners were announced. The rest of the evening was filled with the kind of fellowship known only to veterans who served together.

Sunday morning dawned with the realization that it was almost over. The farewell breakfast allowed everyone to say their final goodbyes, although no one really wanted to. The closing remarks of Chairman Skip marked the end of this chapter. As the room emptied, everyone knew it was only a year until the next reunion.

Many shipmates brought wives, grown children, or other guests to share in their enjoyment of the reunion. Shipmates attending the reunion included:

Ron Altman
Ralph Ayasse*
Dave Beeler
George Berninger*



Jan Smits*
Ray Spicer*
Ed Stith
Buddy Stringer*
Irving Wetmore
Harry Zimmer*

* Shareholder

** Relative of deceased shipmate

Jill Breslau**
Nelson Buck
Paul Buckner
Bobby Capley
Roger Crane*
John Davidson
Dan Declet
Bob Devault*
Bill Devroe*
Hugh Doherty
John Feeley*
George Gardner*
Ed Gaskell
Pete Gersbacher
Lou Glockzin
Norma Jane Haney**
Tony Haring
Jack Hitchcock
Hill Holbrook
Dennis Hurley
Luther Johnson
Tom Jones
Al Kenyon
Dick Lacy
Paul Lint
Tom Lobello
Steve Mamikonian
John Mazzarini
Ed Miller*
Tom Miller
Jack Nelson
Al Pemantel
Jack Raso*
Pat Reding
Skip Sander
Artie Schnackenberg
Frank Shaw
Carl Siciliano
Charley Smith



CHRISTMAS DINNER — 1945



Turkey Noodle Soup
Celery-in-Branch
Mixed Olives
Sweet Mixed Pickles
Cranberry Sauce
Roast Young Tom Turkey
Sage Dressing
French Peas
Glazed Carrots
Cream Whipped Potatoes
Giblet Gravy
Rolls and Butter
Pumpkin Pie ala Mode
Coffee
Mixed Nuts
Hard Candy
Cigars

Menu courtesy of Charles Ulsas, SK2, USS Rankin, 1945.

NEW YEAR'S LOG — 1957

This proud lady of the sea,
Is moored starboard side to pier three.
With standard mooring lines doubled up for any condition,
And bow, stern, and forward spring wires in addition.
At the Newport News Virginia Shipbuilding and Drydock Company,
Receiving miscellaneous services from their facility.
Throughout the ship condition modified baker is set,
This ship stays ready like a worried old vet.
Ships present in the area total quite a few,
Units of the U.S. Fleet and foreign nations too.
All are friendly right now, at the start of this new year,
Pray this situation will continue providing us with peace and good cheer.
SOPA is our own Commanding Officer today,
He's an easy man to follow because he knows the way.
It's been an eventful year—old '56,
We've been round half the world, had lots of kicks.
We have carried Marines, fulfilled many a mission,
Were awarded a plaque for Battle Efficient Condition.
But keep your foreign ports, keep Mandalay
Keep Marseille, France—give us the U.S.A.
The Exec's on board, the Captain's not on the scene,
But no one is worried, the OOD is a United States Marine.

M. M. Brunner
1ST LT, USMC

TRADITIONS

Since early times, many Navy ships, including the Rankin, have followed two seasonal traditions: serving an outstanding holiday meal on Christmas, and writing the New Year's midwatch log in verse.

The Christmas menu to the left was the first ever on the brand-new AKA, which had been commissioned in February of that year. We like to think that the food (and cigars) were great. We *know* that our plankowners remember it just that way.

The log to the left was written 50 years ago, and it still seems fresh today. It's easy to imagine young Ensigns and the occasional 1st Lieutenant working hard to put their 2007 entry in verse. You can see more about verse logs on our web site. Just click "New Year's Logs" on the home page.

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The USS Rankin Association
153 Mayer Drive
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(412) 367-1376
ussrankin@aol.com
www.ussrankin.org

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