



USS HOLT (DE 706) "HOLT HAPPENINGS"

A Newsletter for and about the crew and their families

Vol. IX No. 2

June 1999

Fifth Reunion Set For May 3 - 6, 2000 in Hampton, Virginia

HOLIDAY INN, HAMPTON HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTER SITE FOR 2000 REUNION

Our year 2000 reunion will be at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center, Hampton, VA located at the intersection of I-64 and Mercury Blvd. The hotel offers a number of things that you have indicated as being importanteasy access, nearby shopping and fast food restaurants, a trolley that comes by the front door on a regular schedule and serves the shopping area as well as downtown Hampton, a centrally located hospitality room of adequate size, on-site restaurant and lounge, and a reasonable room rate. Our room rate will be \$70.00 per night, single or double, plus taxes (currently 10%). This rate will be good for three days before or after the reunion for those interested in extending their visit.

Make your reservations directly with the hotel by calling 1-800-842-9370 or 1-757-838-0200

and identifying yourself with the USS HOLT (DE 706) REUNION. This is important in order to get our group rate. Check-in time will be 4:00 pm and check-out time will be 11:00 am. Check with the front desk for later check-out.

The reservation must be guaranteed with a credit card number or a deposit in the amount of one night's room and tax. The Holiday Inn's address is 1815 West Mercury Blvd., Hampton, VA 23666-3229. Their FAX number is 1-757-838-4964.

Schedule of events

The tours that we have scheduled should have something of interest for all hands....HOLT crew, ladies, and young folks. Below is a thumbnail sketch.

Wednesday, May 3, 2000 - Arrival day.
Hospitality Room will open about noon.

Thursday, May 4th - This morning we'll board our motor coach (with a guide) for the short

drive to downtown Norfolk and a visit to the MacArthur Memorial. This building houses an outstanding collection of artifacts, documents, photographs and memorabilia covering the life and times of General Douglas MacArthur. The General is entombed in the rotunda of the memorial. Following this, we will re-board our bus for a narrated tour of old and new Norfolk...viewing the Chrysler Museum and several of the lovely old historic homes in Norfolk. We will then board the '*SPIRIT OF NORFOLK*,' for a two-hour luncheon cruise of Norfolk harbor (just like the old days, except we don't have to set the special sea detail!). We'll enjoy a sumptuous buffet as we cruise the Hampton Roads area, viewing the Naval Base and the ships from the water side. The '*SPIRIT OF NORFOLK*' has two climate-controlled lower decks and an open-air upper deck. Following the cruise, we'll re-board the bus for a short visit to the MacArthur Center, a large, new shopping mall in downtown Norfolk. Special discount coupons will be available for the ladies to use in the mall. We'll return to the hotel by 4:00 pm. The cost of this tour is \$42.00 per person, all inclusive.

Friday, May 5th - Another interesting day! We'll board the motor coach for a driving tour of the Norfolk Naval Base and the Norfolk Naval Air Station. These two facilities comprise some 8000 acres of land and is the home to more than 100,000 military personnel. It is also the home port for more than 100 naval vessels, 26 aircraft squadrons and is the headquarters for Commander, Atlantic Fleet and Commander, Submarines, Atlantic. Additionally, the base provides logistical support to the Navy in far-flung places.

Next, we'll visit the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, encompassing some 155 acres of gardens featuring large collections of azaleas, camellias, roses and rhododendrons. Then, it's off to Fort Monroe in Hampton to tour the Casemate Museum and other well preserved buildings of

this active Army Post. We will have lunch at the Fort Monroe Officers Club overlooking the Chesapeake Bay before returning to our hotel in mid-afternoon. The cost of this tour is \$36.00 per person, all inclusive.

In the next HOLT Newsletter, we will have the forms to be used to sign up for these tours.

Saturday, May 6th - This day is open, with the only scheduled activity being the business meeting for the crew (we anticipate this being scheduled in the morning about 9:00 am). This will be a short meeting to receive the Treasurer's report and to decide on the site for the next reunion. Spend the day in the hospitality room visiting with shipmates or visit some of the many interesting places in the Norfolk area.

Our closing banquet will be at 7:00 pm. Just prior to the banquet (around 5:00 pm), we plan on having a photo session. Details on this will be in your reunion registration packet.

The hospitality room will again be the focal point for visiting your shipmates. It will be well stocked with refreshments and snacks.

This is a short overview of what is anticipated for the HOLT reunion. Start planning your trip to attend. Norfolk Airport has convenient air service by several air carriers and is only about 15 minutes from our hotel. We will provide info on airport transportation service in the next newsletter. Also, in the next newsletter we will have reunion registration data. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please let Bill Morgan know

We'll try to get you some answers.

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Airlines serving Norfolk, VA Airport include Northwest, Continental, United, US AIR and Delta.

The registration form is included with this newsletter. Please send the completed form with your check to Paul Pickett.

Please register early. We need to know how many people to plan for so we can make the appropriate arrangements with the hotel for the banquet and with the tour operator for buses.

OTHER STUFF

We had an interesting visit to the small hill country town of Fredericksburg, Texas in June. Lois and I were invited to the dedication of the George W. Bush (former President) "Gallery of the Pacific War" addition to the Admiral Nimitz Museum of The Pacific War. It was a scorching day. Despite the heat, President Bush and several other dignitaries made mercifully short speeches, then cut the ribbon so we could enter the delightfully cool building. The layout of the exhibits is well thought out.....starting with the political events that led up to the attack on Pearl Harbor, then progressing on thru the major naval engagements to the surrender ceremonies in Tokyo Bay. This new building allows the museum to exhibit items they had no room for in the past, such as a hatch off the Battleship ARIZONA.....an operational B-25 bomber of the sort that Gen. Billy Mitchell flew off the HORNET to attack Tokyo and numerous other items.

If you are ever in the south-central part of Texas, plan a stop in Fredericksburg (about 60 miles NW of San Antonio). Besides the museum, there are numerous old German restaurants and the ladies will enjoy the many quaint shops! The local brew pubs and winery are not bad for a small town and

Fredericksburg is a quaint place with friendly people.

NAVAL TRIVIA

Victor Blue, the commanding officer of the HOLT for most of the ship's life, was the son of Rear Admiral Victor Blue (1865 - 1928). Admiral Blue had another son, John S. Blue, who was the Navigator on the USS JUNEAU. He was lost along with all but 10 of the crew, in the night battle off Guadalcanal 13 November 1942. A destroyer was named for Admiral Blue (DD 387) who served as chief of the Bureau of Navigation in Washington and as commanding officer of the battleship, TEXAS (BB35). When the destroyer BLUE was sunk early in WW II, a new one was named for John S. Blue. Our shipmate, John McGauley served on the newer BLUE (DD 744) during the Korean War.

"A DE, my friends, is a destroyer-escort. It is the answer to the problem of the tremendous amounts of convoying in a war, amounts so huge we simply hadn't time to build full-fledged destroyers for escort. The DE was the result"
Ernie Pyle, April 1945

What do Destroyer-Escorts do? They roll and they plunge. They buck and they twist. They shudder and they fall through space. Their sailors say they should have flight pay and submarine pay both....they're in the air half the time and under the water half the time.

Ernie Pyle, Okinawa April 1945

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. So, in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them to settle down and mind their own pints and

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quarts. This is said to be the origin of today's "Mind your P's and Q's."

Before we had thermometers, brewers would dip their thumb into the mix to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold and the yeast would not grow. Too hot and the yeast would die. This thumb in the beer is reputed to be the origin of the phrase, "Rule of Thumb."

Marshall Gebert passed along this item he received from an old shipmate.....

Two old veterans were sitting around the bar in the local VFW hall. Their discussion centered around which of them had experienced the most hazardous duty. One, a grizzled old Marine allowed as his was no doubt the most hazardous as he had participated in the amphibious landings on Guadalcanal in WW II and had a tough time chasing the enemy off the island. Following this, he participated in the Saipan invasion, again having a bloody time defeating the enemy. A few years later, he fought in the cold winter battle of 1950 in Korea. The old Navy Chief listened patiently to the Marine recount his experiences. Then, taking a long pull on his bottle of beer, said, "Don't see how you can complain. All your tours were shore duty".

Perspective

A wealthy man took his son on a trip to the country so he could have his son see first hand how poor some country people were. They stayed a day and a night in a very humble farm home. Back home, at the end of the trip, the father asked his soon "What do you think of the trip?" The son replied, "Very nice." "Did you notice how poor they were?", asked the father. "Yes", replied the son. The father asked what the son had learned.

The son replied, "I learned that we have one dog in the house...and they have four. We have a fountain in the garden and they have a stream that has no end. Our garden goes to the edge of our property, they have the entire horizon as their back yard.

At the end of the son's reply, the father was speechless and his son added..."Thank you Dad for showing me how poor we really are."

It all depends on your view of life.

Thanks to Leonard Thompson for this gem.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
MAY 3 - 6, 2000
HOLIDAY INN & CONFERENCE CENTER
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA