



Leaky Weeks Almanac

**USS John W Weeks
Association**

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Dear Weeks Shipmates and Friends

In about three months, we will be in Southern New England for our 23rd reunion. Our last reunion in the New England area was in 2002. So far, the response for our return trip has been good, but could be better. As a reminder, if you didn't make a room reservation you need to do it soon!!! The hotel is holding rooms until they sell out or until August 27, 2010, whichever comes first. Once the block of rooms are gone we may have difficulty getting extra rooms. We are staying at the Crowne Plaza, Warwick at a great rate of \$99 per night and that includes a hot breakfast buffet. In addition, the hotel is first class and has an outstanding reputation and a good working relation with military associations. Remember, you can make your hotel reservations now and if something would change, you may cancel your room up to 24 hours prior to arrival and not be charged. The other thing you need to do is send your fees to Military Reunion Planners by August 27, 2010. If you misplaced your reunion information and registration forms that were in the last newsletter, you can go to our website under this year's reunion, there is a link to the hotel and printable forms. If you don't have access to a computer and the web, give me a call and I will send them to you.



In the last newsletter I asked for volunteers to help out at the reunion; I would like to thank those shipmates for responding. I will get back to you as we get closer to the reunion As I pointed out in the last newsletter, it won't require a lot of time or work if we get several people to participate. We will need people to setup and take down the memorabilia in the hospitality room, man the check-in table for a short time on Monday or Tuesday, help out at our business meeting on Thursday morning, and take pictures for the website and newsletter. By doing some of the minor work ourselves we can hold down our registration fees to our attendees. More information will follow on the web and in the next newsletter. If you are coming to the reunion and want to help out, please contact me.

In May, Bea and I along with my brother and his wife took a cruise in the Mediterranean. My brother made a career of the Navy and served on the USS Kenneth D Bailey (DD/DDR-713) around the time that I was on the Weeks. Like the Weeks the Bailey made several trips to the Med in the fifties and on one occasion we were in port at the same time. On the cruise we kept reminiscing about the days when we were young sailors and how the ports in the Med were then, it didn't enter our minds that things change over fifty years. And in those days there were few, if any, cruise ships cruising the Mediterranean. Now days, this time of the year there are at least three to four cruise ships in every major port with up to 2500 or more passengers per ship; this makes some of the landmarks very crowded. For example, I remember going to the Acropolis in Athens in the fifties and there were few tourists. Now there are wall-to-wall people, at most of these landmarks; if I stopped to try and compose a picture, I got ran over by other tourist. Overall it was a good experience, but how things changed over fifty years. Our flight home was delayed four hours, and with the time lag by time we reached US soil we were physically exhausted. However, our spirits were lifted when the US Custom Agent said to us, "Welcome home". Our country is currently going through turbulent times, but we are blessed to be Americans and it is always great to return home to the greatest nation on the earth!

Now for an update on changes to our website, it is currently about 70% complete; however, I ran into several technical difficulties on the website coding and had problems with my computer that threw off my schedule. I just finished working through all of these issues and will have it up and running in late August. I would like to thank Tom Wilson our Historian for reviewing and reworking the history of the Weeks for the new website.

In the meantime, if there are concerns or if you just have questions; feel free to contact me or other members of our committee.

Thanks again for your support,
Len Budzynski

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Register for this year's reunion! We will meet in Southern New England October 11-October 15. Registration deadline August 27th. Forms were in the last newsletter. Forms are posted on our website.

Attention!
Please make sure that we have your correct home address! If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, contact me.
Also, if you have an email address, or you changed your email address, please update us with this information.



Train Crash Work Earns Sailor Medal

From an article that appeared in The Ledger-Star, November 29, 1962. The article is written by Jack Kestner. The article was submitted by Maurice Teague. Maurice served aboard the Weeks from 1955 - 1962 as a TM2.

Norfolk - A 19 year-old sailor aboard the Norfolk-based destroyer John W. Weeks will become the first seaman in the history of the Navy to be awarded the Legion of Merit. Secretary of the Navy Fred Korth will fly to Norfolk Wednesday to make the presentation that morning on behalf President Kennedy. Seaman-Radioman William D. Hodges of Greenbelt, Md., will be presented this third highest peacetime award for "exceptionally meritorious conduct" at the scene of a train wreck last July 28.

Hodges, a seaman Apprentice at the time, was member of a drill team returning by bus to Bainbridge, Md., from a parade at Port Royal, Pa. On arriving at the scene of the nine-car derailment in Steelton, Pa., Hodges ordered the bus to stop. He immediately organized his drill team into a rescue unit and proceeded to remove the injured and dead from the twisted wreckage. When an Air Force major arrived on the scene, he considered Hodges' organization so effective that he offered his services to the seaman rather than take over as senior officer present. Moreover, when the captain of the Pennsylvania State Police arrived he maintained the organization without interference or direction. The citation accompanying the award reads in part:

"Displaying unusual organizational skill, firm leadership and quick initiative, he directed and personally participated in rescue and evacuation operations for a period of approximately eight hours, contributing greatly to the saving of many lives and to the alleviation of human suffering."

Last night, Hodges was honored at a Chamber of Commerce dinner in Hyattsville, Md. Cmdr. George D Walker, executive officer of the Weeks (which is in the Naval Shipyard undergoing overhaul), said today, "We're very proud to have him aboard." Hodges, he said, had proven himself a good sailor and "will probably go a long way." Walker said that the seaman's actions had proved that leadership in the Navy works "not only from the top down but from the bottom up."

Hodges' mother will be present for the ceremony, which is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. aboard the Weeks. Korth will helicopter to Atlantic Fleet headquarters following the ceremony for a briefing on Atlantic Fleet support to U.S. naval forces in Europe. He will leave for Washington around noon.



Photos From the Fifties submitted by Carl Lunde



Signal Bridge 1957- Unknown, Sabastaino & Mcallister



Naples 1957

A Navy Tradition - From the making of a shellback

In the U.S. Navy, when a ship crosses the equator a time-honored ceremony takes place. This is an event no sailor ever forgets.

With few exceptions, those who have been inducted into the "Ancient Order of the deep" by Neptunus Rex and his Royal court, count the experience as a highlight of their naval career. Officially recognized by service record entries indicating date, time, latitude and longitude, the crossing of the equator involves elaborate preparation by the "shellbacks" (those who have crossed the equator before) to ensure the "pollywogs" (those who are about to cross the equator for the first time) are properly indoctrinated. All pollywogs, even the Commanding Officer if he has not crossed before, must participate.

Pollywogs must pay their respect to King Neptune, God of the Seas. The Shellbacks, having been across before and now are "Sons of Neptune" play the roles of a variety of characters such as King Neptune, Neptune's Queen, Davey Jones, the Royal Baby, the Royal Cop, and various other characters of the moment.



The US Navy Peacoat; One of God's Better Inventions - *Author Unknown*

You remember them: those ton and a half monsters that took the annual production of thirty-five sheep to make. Those thick black rascals with black plastic buttons the size of poker chips. The issue coats that drove shore duty chief petty officers stark raving nuts if they caught you with the collar turned up or your hands in your pockets.

"Hey, you rubber sock, get those damn hands outta them damn pockets! Didn't they issue you black leather gloves?" So, you took your hands out of your pockets and risked digital frostbite rather than face whatever the Navy had in store for violators of the 'No Damn Hands In Peacoat Pockets' policy. There's probably a special barracks in Hell full of old E-3s caught hitchhiking in sub-zero weather with hands in peacoat pockets.

As for those leather gloves, one glove always went missing. "Son, where in the hell are the gloves we issued you?" We? I don't remember this nasty, ugly so-n-so being at Great Lakes, San Diego, Orlando or Bainbridge when the 'jocks and socks' petty officers were throwing my initial issue sea bag at me and yelling, "Move it!!" As for the gloves, once you inadvertently leave one glove on a bar stool or on the seat of a Greyhound bus, the remaining glove is only useful if a tank rolls over the hand that fit the lost glove.

In the days long ago, a Navy specification peacoat weighed about the same as a flat carload of cinder blocks. When it rained, it absorbed water until your spine warped, your shins cracked and your ankles split. Five minutes standing in the rain waiting on a bus and you felt like you were piggy-backing the Statue of Liberty. When a peacoat got wet, it smelled a lot like sheep dip. It had that wet wool smell, times three. It weighed three and a half tons and smelled like 'Mary had a little lamb's gym shorts.

You know how heavy a late '40s peacoat was? Well, they had little metal chains sewn in the back of the collar to hang them up by. Like diluted Navy coffee, sexual sensitivity instruction, comfortable air-conditioned bungalows, patent leather plastic-looking shoes and wearing white hats configured to look like bidets, the peacoat specification has been watered down to the point you could hang them up with dental floss. In the old days, peacoat buttons and grocery cart wheels were interchangeable. The gear issued by the U.S. Navy was tough as hell, bluejacket-tested clothing with the durability of rhino hide and construction equipment tires. Peacoats came with wide, heavy collars. In a cold, hard wind, you could turn that wide collar up to cover your neck and it was like poking your head in a tank turret.

The things were warm, but I never thought they were long enough. Standing out in the wind in those 'big-legged britches' (bell bottoms), the wind whistled up your cuffs and took away body warmth like a thief. But, they were perfect to pull over you for a blanket when sleeping on a bus or a bus terminal bench. Every sailor remembers stretching out on one of those oak bus station pews with his flat-hat over his face, his head up against his AWOL bag and covered with his peacoat. There was always some 'SP' who had not fully evolved from the apes, who poked you with his billy club and said, "Hey, you! Get up! Waddya think yer doin'? You wanna sleep, get a room!"

Peacoats were lined with quilted satin or rayon. I never realized it at the time, but sleeping on bus seats and station benches would be the closest I would ever get to sleeping on satin sheets. Early in my naval career, a career-hardened (lifer) first class gunner's mate told me to put my ID and liberty card in the inside pocket of my peacoat. "Put the sonuvabitches in that gahdam inside pocket and pin the damn thing closed with a diaper pin. Then, take your heavy folding money and put it in your sock. If you do that, learn to never take your socks off in a cathouse. Them damn dockside pickpockets pat 'cha down for a lumpy wallet and they can relieve you of said wallet so fast you'll never know you've been snookered. Only an idiot will clam-fold his wallet and tuck it in his thirteen button bell bottoms. Every kid above the age of six in Italy knows how to lift a wallet any fool pokes in his pants. Those little locals learned to pick sailor's pockets in kindergarten. Rolling Bluejackets is the national sport in Italy."

In Washington DC they have a wonderful marble and granite plaza honoring the United States Navy. Every man or woman who served this nation in a naval uniform, owes it to himself or herself to visit this memorial and take their families. It honors all naval service and any red-blooded American bluejacket or officer will feel the gentle warmth of pride his or her service is honored within this truly magical place. The focal point of this memorial is a bronze statue of a lone American sailor. No crow on his sleeve tells you that he is non-rated. And, there are further indications that suggest maybe, once upon a time, the sculptor himself may have once been an E-3 white hat. The lad has his collar turned up and his hands in his pockets. I'm sure the Goddess of the Main Induction laughs at the old, crusty chiefs standing there with veins popping out on their old, wrinkled necks, muttering, "Look at that S.O.B. standing there with his collar up and his damn hands in his pockets. In my day, I would have ripped that jerk a new one!"

Ah, the satisfied glow of E-3 revenge. Peacoats -- one of God's better inventions.

New Navy Uniform

About a month ago I was talking to Tom Wilson, he mentioned that when he was in Hawaii visiting his Daughter, he went to a parade honoring the Military. He noticed a Navy Photographer wearing a uniform like the one shown in the photo. The sailor told him that the uniform was optional. I found the following at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uniforms_of_the_United_States_Navy. The Navy underwent a comprehensive review of every uniform from 2006 through 2007, intending to replace the different seasonal service uniforms with a single year-round service uniform for personnel E-1 through E-6. Accordingly, the Navy Service Uniform will replace the Winter Blue Uniform and Summer White Uniform (both discussed above), which will phase out on December 31, 2010 when the rollout of the New Service Uniform is complete. Enlisted personnel will then have a single Service Uniform. Navy JROTC units will also receive this new uniform.





Aboard the Weeks, July 19, 1945

I found this article with some of the WWII documents from the Weeks. At this point I don't know who wrote it, if any of you WWII shipmates recognize the document, please let me know.

Here it is a swell sunny day and I'm trying to take advantage of it, but I'm afraid the Navy rules again. The sky is a bright blue and the sea with its smooth blue rolling waves showing their cute white slips to the sun, make the day seem like one out of a dream book—but still there lurks the feeling of what might be behind the next cloud or beyond the horizon—aside from that it might be an ordinary day in life.

I just came through something, something I'll never forget. It all started yesterday. Oh, yesterday began like all the rest; sunset G.Q., then the old routine of standing watches and keeping the ship clean. But there came the dark cloud out of nowhere, or I could say from the Big Boys—Our Orders.

Out of a Task Force of ships, we were ordered to go to the mouth of Tokyo Bay. We topped off our 'cans' and when the sun began to set, we set forth on our mission. Most of the men had that uncertain feeling—Yes, I did too. As the night came on our minds began to play tricks on us. Then General Quarters, it was here at last. My heart began to beat faster, my mind sharpened to the least little sound. Our course it was one that made my head spin. We proceeded as directed, starting at a point on the coast of Japan, I can't say what point.

The moon shining down on the ship, casting a black monstrous reflection on the sinister water, gave me the feeling of a fox in a trap. Smoke poured out of number two stack as we increased our speed. In my mind I knew that we were too small to be seen yet, my heart was telling my conscience a different story. We slowed down as we came to where their surface craft were said to be. Again black smoke poured out of the stack. We all wondered if the ships knew what they were doing. Finally the voice of the Captain broke the silence of the night—Men we're here. Our orders are to sink any surface craft the Japs have around here. This job was given to us with the trust that we could and will carry it out to the ideals of an American, he continued—Men I'm not going to make a speech about the United States Navy, but I do want you to give it all you've got. Tonight we're going to make history...

History!! History my eye, that was the hushed talk that was going around among the men. Most of us would have traded places with any 4-F right then and there, but we did remember the boys from the HANCOCK.

As the John W. steamed through the night, we came to the position of our five inch firing range. Passing through the mouth of the bay our radar gismos picked up a few surface contacts. Not a moment was lost, two of the 'cans' were told to investigate the contact. The so called Radar Girls were keeping a close watch on the scopes.

Upon coming into the range of the intruder the assigned ships challenged him. The speaker bellowed and the crew, all of us held our breath. "Unknown station, I have you bearing — —", no answer; at that moment flashes came through the night. We knew then there came into view a light. Not the kind your thinking of, but signals.

Every man on the ship knew what it was, —A sub! An American Sub!! Being night she had come to the surface to charge her batteries. Was she hit? Was anyone killed or hurt? Seconds passed, they seemed like hours. At last it came, no one was hurt or killed. Our minds were at ease now.

A few hours had passed by this time. The Japs must know we're here now. Two hours had passed since our ship had entered the bay. Still no Japs attacked. What was a matter? The Japs weren't going to let us come into their backdoor without a fight, were they? We surely were passed their front porch. It was unbelievable!

Some of the boys were getting a little cocky by this time. It didn't take much to bring them down to the deck again. "We're not out of it yet boys"; that was said by a little fellow who was standing next to his 20mm gun. Not another word was said, except by a sailor who wanted a cig.

Shortly after the Cruisers who were with us, let go with their big guns. There were about a hundred shots fired. Slam bang! (Into Tokyo Harbor.) shhh. We passed the mainland now and were coming to some islands, and still no surface craft were to be seen, Was our little trip here known to the Japs? No, if it were, they would have had a reception party waiting for us. There just weren't any ships to blast at...

We passed the islands without firing a shot. This is something for the books. Eight miles from the mainland and we didn't have to fire a single shot to defend ourselves. Things like this me think we're winning the war. Just think what a battleships could have done. Why in no time the boys would be getting liberty in Tokyo itself.



New Members

Jim Evans	SF3	62 - 66	Larry Nicholson	MM2	59 - 63
Alton Gunderson	FTG3	60 - 62	Joseph Rothengast	FTSN	64 - 64
Bill Hayman	SN	61 - 63	Fred Robinson	MM2	68 - 69
Clarence P Howard JR	ETR3	67 - 69	Dennis Slapo	SN	62 - 64

Sick Call

George Dumas - George had a total hip replacement on July 7, 2010. The problem is a continuance from when he broke the hip two years ago and only the ball was replaced. He also had an issue with occasional severe leg pain, hopefully the surgery will correct this problem. I talked to George a couple days after his surgery and he seemed to be doing well. He told me that he will be going into rehab facility after he leaves the hospital. Cards can be sent to 816 95th Ln NE; Blaine MN 55434-2586

Tony Johnson - I received the following from Kate Johnson. Just wanted to let all of you know that Tony had back surgery on May 31, 2010. I talked to Tony the other day, he is currently home and is doing well and currently going through rehab. Tony served on the Weeks from 1954-1959. His phone number is (828) 287-5615 and address is 214 Ridgeland Dr; Rutherfordton, NC 28139-2062.

If you know of any of our shipmates or family members that are sick, in the hospital, or deceased; please contact Bob Miller or Len Budzynski.



Taps

Barry Johnston - The son of Audrey and Ron DePass passed away in June 2010 after a long and courageous fight with cancer. Ron served on the Weeks during WWII. Cards can be sent to Ron and Audrey at 5740 Columbine Way; Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Patrick Calhoun - Coye Calhoun informed the Association that her husband Patrick passed away on April 13, 2010. He served on the Weeks from 1955-1958 as a second class Electronic Technician. Cards can be sent to his wife Coye at 418 West 12th St; Claremore, OK 74017

Eugene Tatera - I received the following from our shipmate Jim Veld; please add Eugene to our list of deceased shipmates, he passed away on May 9, 2010. He was a radioman and served on the Weeks 1955-1957. His wife passed away several years ago, cards should be sent in to his Family, at 4452D West Dakin St; Chicago, IL 60641

Harvey Bashist - My father Harvey Bashist (he changed the family name to Baxter after leaving the Navy), sailed on the John W. Weeks World Cruise in 53-54. He was an Ensign and later a LTJG; I'm not sure of the date of his promotion. After his service, he worked as a teacher while attending Brooklyn Law School, where he was the president of his class. After graduation, he married my mother, and they moved to Florida, where he practiced law, and served as a Miami-Dade County judge for two decades. He became disabled in the mid-90s, and passed away in 2007. He is buried in Hollywood, FL. I'm sure he would have joined your organization had he been healthy all these years. You can contact Mitchell Baxter at mitchbax@gmail.com.

Joseph J Jenestreet - My name is Kim Jenestreet. My father was a crew member in the early 50's, aboard the Weeks. His name was Joseph J. Jenestreet, from Bridgeport CT. I came across the site you have online and wanted to let you know about him. I've heard lots of stories of his time in the Navy, I found all the letters he wrote to his Mom that she saved from 1951-1954. He was proud to serve. He passed away from cancer January 18, 2002, in Bristol CT. He was only 68. You can contact Kim Jenestreet at kjenestreet@hotmail.com.

Jack Walker - My Uncle Jack Walker was also on the USS Weeks - I am not sure of the dates, I believe the same time as my dad (Wes Budenski) - he passed away in August of 2000 - he was a wonderful man, retired from the Navy - had 2 sons and retired in Orlando, FL where his family is still living. I will make sure my brothers and sisters see this! You can contact Dawn Smith at dawn@floridapropertymanager.com.

A note from Carl Lunde on Charlie Wilson

You latest newsletter (and my query of 3/2) did result in my looking thru old photo files and cruise notes from my days aboard the Weeks. As I thought about it, recalled a tall, lanky ensign that I thought hailed from Texas and was on the Weeks Med tour with the Sixth Fleet during the period January - June 1957. Sort of surprised myself when I came up with an old color slide photo complete with some specific notes written at the time. The attached photo is that slide and it is of Charlie Wilson, then an ensign (my estimate as he was a June 1956 USNA graduate). Off duty obviously, but displaying some of the flamboyance for which he became famous later. Along with the "Texas" checkers and red vest, note the boots! This shot was taken on the starboard side outside of the hatch on the main deck that lead to the aft officers quarters. You can just see the depth charge racks behind Charlie. The other player, back to camera, is Lt. Ernest (Ernie) Chuilli. At the time I think he was the OPS Officer. The picture would have been taken sometime in the Spring of 1957. At the time the Weeks was in transit south of Italy and Greece between Toronto, Italy and Piraeus, Greece.





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