

USS Aeolus 10th Reunion: A Time To Remember In Jacksonville FL



USS Aeolus Newsletter

NOW HEAR THIS

Happy New Year to all of you Aeolus Shipmates. The latest reunion in Jacksonville FL in October was all it was expected to be and more. The Crown Plaza Resort Hotel was a perfect venue. 22 shipmates and 17 spouses or invited guest greatly enjoyed the activities and accommodations. The event started as they all do with a reception in the hospitality room where everyone got to meet and greet their shipmates and catch up on each others past 18 months. In addition Pizza and beverages were provided and enjoyed by all.

On Thursday morning we all boarded a bus that took us to the Oldest City in the US, St Augustine. We were treated to a tour of the city guided expertly by Gary Sass of AdLib Tours.



As you might guess, Gary, dressed in period costume did a great job of describing life in the Colony. We visited a number of famous sites including the Flagler Memorial Presbyterian Church built by Henry Flagler as a memorial to his daughter in 1890. To say it was impressive would be an understatement.

After the tour we were free to explore St Augustine on our own. Many of us took this opportunity to enjoy lunch

Historic district and visit some of the other historic sites in the area.

We boarded the buses once more for the trip back to the hotel to prepare for dinner which was excellent as usual. After a short bus ride we had dined at Singleton's Seafood Shack. To look at the place from the outside, one wondered if this was a great idea. But inside we soon discovered a great meal was to be enjoyed.

Friday brought us another bus trip this time to tour the Naval Station Mayport. This expansive facility was amazing. We had lunch provided at the Chief's club and as an added treat we were taken to the Navy Exchange on base and permitted to shop and purchase a variety of items. Then it was time to board the bus once again for a tour of the Anheuser-Busch Brewery.



The highpoint of this tour seemed to be the tasting room. Not sure why but lets just remember these are sailors after all.

We once again boarded our wonderful transport coach back to hotel to prepare for dinner at Mojo's Bar and Grill. Another great choice for dinner that seemed to be greatly enjoyed by all.

On Saturday we were given the day off to enjoy on our own the sites and sounds of the City of Jacksonville. Many took the

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Opportunity to explore the shops of Jacksonville while others chose to tour the areas in and around the city.

Of course one of the highlights of each reunion is the Banquet and business meeting which was held in the ballroom of the Crown Plaza hotel. The dinner was proceeded by a cocktail hour with snacks. Dinner buffet followed with an exceptional assortment of well prepared dishes. The business meeting followed with discussions of the health of the Aeolus Association and the direction and location of the next reunion. To give you a hint the next reunion may be somewhere in the northeast part of the country (Portsmouth area) and will be held mid year in 2015. That gives you all time to plan on attending. We look forward to seeing our shipmates at that reunion perhaps in our old stomping grounds.

New Faces Attending the Aeolus Reunion.

Two new faces along with spouses were seen at this past reunion. Joe Gentry (Yvonne) and Steve Tyas (Linda) were first timers for this reunion. We welcome them and hope they return to the next one. Steve Tyas while not technically a Aeolus shipmate served aboard the sister ship, Thor. Here are Steve's comments on the Aeolus Reunion.

USS AEOLUS ARC 3, JACKSONVILLE 2013 RE-UNION

Steve Tyas MMFN, USS Thor ARC 4-- MM2, USS Nitro AE 23-- first Aeolus reunion..My wife Linda and I live in Saint Augustine, FL so we only had a thirty mile drive to get to the hotel. After getting settled in our room we went to find the hospitality room. It was large enough to accommodate the forty plus people comfortably and had plenty of refreshments. The two daily tours, one to Saint Augustine and the other to the Mayport Naval Base, were very well run and gave us plenty of time to browse around. The two evening dinners at local restaurants brought in the homey atmosphere one would hope to find and the Saturday evening banquet was top drawer with plenty of time for pictures and smoozing with sea stories galore which we all enjoy. I can heartily recommend to any veteran sailor to attend at least one of these reunions in the future. You will be welcomed immediately and become one of the crew which may spur you on to attend another.

Mike Jarvis is a rare fellow to be able to put this entire outing together in such a quality manner. My hat is off to him. We are looking forward to the next reunion in the Portsmouth, NH area.



IN MEMORIAM



It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of the following

Curtis N. Gray BM3. 82 Passed away on 6/12/2013 in Oak Run, CA. Curtis served aboard the Aeolus from 1955-1958. He was a Plank Owner.

Eugene R. Battles MCEN. 92 Passed away 4/7/2013 in Norfolk, VA. Eugene served aboard the Aeolus from 1957-1960.

Jeffrey L. Wilhoit, HN2 72 Passed away 11/2012 in Lafayette, IN. Jeff served aboard the Aeolus from 1972-1973.

Terry K Spooner FNDC 74 Passed away 5/19/2013 in Lake, MI. Terry served aboard the Aeolus from 1959-1963.

At this time we have no other notifications of the passing of any other shipmates. If you know of the passing of a member of the crew that we have not previously noted in the newsletter, please let us know.

New Faces continued :

The other new faces at this past reunion were that of Joe Gentry and his wife Yvonne. Joe served aboard the Aeolus from 1978-1980. He was a PO3 Radioman. "Yvonne and I enjoyed the reunion. We had a good time meeting all the people and hearing the stories from everybody else from when they were onboard. We felt very welcomed and made a lot of friends." They would definitely want to attend another one. Joe enlisted on the delayed entry program while still in high school and went to boot camp in Orlando FL. After boot camp, he went to A school in San Diego then back down to Florida at NAS Whiting Field. He was there for 18 months then transferred to the Aeolus. The Aeolus had just been transferred to the maritime fleet as the USNS Aeolus. There were only 7 Navy sailors aboard at that time and the officer in charge was an E7 chief. Joe says it was really good duty. Good food on that ship. They actually had chefs that worked on the ship. Joe has some interesting stories from his time aboard and would love to share them. We will try and relate some in the future.

Pictures for the USS Aeolus Association Reunion Oct 2013 in Jacksonville Fl.



Reunion Planning

Our next reunion will be held in the late summer or autumn of 2015. This reunion will be located somewhere between Boston and Portland. We are open to suggestions.

It has been suggested that we invite former crew members from the other cable ships to join us at future reunions. Your officers believe this is a good way to keep attendance at a high enough level to justify chartering busses and scheduling facilities economically.

If you know anyone who has served on another cable ship, get in touch with him and send his contact information to Mike Jarvis (mjarvis@nandc.com).

The cable ships are:

USS Portunus ARC-1

USS Neptune ARC-2

USS Aeolus ARC-3

USS Thor ARC-4

USS Yamacraw ARC-5

USNS Albert J Myer T-ARC-6

USNS Zeus T-ARC-7

Profiles of the ARC-1 and ARC-5 follow on the next two pages. We will publish more profiles in future newsletters.

USS Yamacraw ARC 5

- **Chimo Class Auxiliary Minelayer:** *l Arthur Murray* by the Marietta Manufacturing Co., Point Pleasant, WV

Acquired by the Navy, 2 January 1945 and converted to an *Auxiliary*

- Laid down for the U. S. Army Coast Artillery Corps, Mine Planter Service as *USAMP Major General Minelayer* at the Charleston Navy Yard, Charleston, SC
- Commissioned *USS Trapper (ACM-9)*, 15 March 1945
- Decommissioned, 20 June 1946 and transferred to the Coast Guard as *USCGC Yamacraw (WARC-333)*
- Struck from the Navy Register 19 July 1946
- *Yamacraw* was featured in the 1958 movie *Onionhead* starring Andy Griffith and Walter Matthau
- Reacquired by the Navy, 17 May 1959
- Converted to a *Cable Repair Ship* and commissioned *USS Yamacraw (ARC-5)*, 30 April 1959
- Decommissioned 2 July 1965, struck from the Navy Register and transferred to the Maritime Administration for disposal

- Fate unknown.

- **Specifications:**

- Displacement 1,300 t.
- Length 188' 2"
- Beam 37'
- Draft 12' 6"
- Speed 12.5 kts.
- Complement 69



- Armament: One 40mm gun mount and four 20mm mounts

- Propulsion: Two Combustion Engineering header type boilers, two 1,200shp Skinner Unaflo reciprocating engines, no reduction gear, two shafts.

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USS Portunus ARC-1

LSM-1 Class Landing Ship Medium:

- Laid down, 1 August 1944, at Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Co., Newark, N.J.
- Launched, 11 September 1944
- Commissioned **USS LSM-275**, 6 October 1944, LT. Daniel D McLoed, USNR in command
- During World War II **USS LSM-275** was assigned to the Asiatic-Pacific Theater:

LSM Flotilla Twelve, LCDR. A. F. Dineen USN (22);

LSM Group Thirty-Six, LT. V. L. Homer USN;

LSM Division Seventy-One

- Decommissioned, 21 April 1947, at Terminal Island Navy Yard, San Pedro, CA.
- Laid up in the Pacific Reserve Fleet
- Redesignated a *Cable Repair Ship*, 14 December 1951
- Converted at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, CA., between 15 January and 18 August 1952
- Recommissioned, **USS Portunus (ARC-1)**, 2 July 1952, LT. Fred J. Fleiner in command
- Decommissioned, 30 April 1959, at New York
- Struck from the Naval Register, 1 May 1959
- Transferred, 16 November 1959, under the Military Assistance Program, to Portugal
- Commissioned into the Portuguese Navy, 18 November 1959 as **NRP Medusa (A5214)**
- Final Disposition, disposed of by Portugal in 1976
- **USS LSM-275** earned one battle star for World War II service

LSM Specifications:

Displacement 520 t.(light), 743 t. (landing) 1,095 t.(fully loaded)

Length 203' 6"ba

Beam 34' 6"

Draft light, 3' 6" forward, 7' 8" aft
fully loaded, 6' 4" forward, 8' 3" aft

Speed 13.2 kts. (max.), (928 tons displacement)

Complement 5 officers
54 enlisted

Armament one single bow mounted 40mm AA gun mount
four single 20mm AA gun mounts

Endurance 4,900 miles @ 12kts.(928 tons displacement)

Armor 10-lb. STS splinter shield to gun mounts, pilot house and conning station

Propulsion

two General Motors (non-reversible with airflex clutch) diesels. Direct drive with 1,440 BHP each @ 720rpm
twin propellers

