

USS SOMERS



Tom & Mary Anne Goforth hold up the tapestry presented to them by Russell Hartley (63-66) and Plank Owner Rod Given (60-64) following the 2010 reunion held at their home in Cameron, OK.

The tapestry includes the U.S. Navy emblem, a photo of the "Somers" and of Tom and MaryAnne as well as the reunion photos of the men and women in attendance at the reunion.

Russell took it upon himself to have the tapestry made and he and Rod presented it to them as a token of the crew's appreciation for the great job they did as Host and Hostess of the reunion.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to offset the cost of the tapestry can send whatever they wish to Bob Plante. Russ has requested any donations received be used to pay the annual association dues of a member or members who are currently unable to do so. We will honor that request to accommodate as many shipmates as possible.

Russell, your generosity is only exceeded by your compassion for your former shipmates.

CHRONOLOGY OF LOVE



Jack (64-66) and BettyJo Grubb

June 1964: At the Pike Amusement Park, Long Beach, California, U.S. Navy Signalman 3rd Class Jack Grubb meets BettyJo. They fall in love on the wooden roller coaster.

March 1965: North Hollywood, California. The corner mailbox accepts the last letter written and mailed to Jack while aboard the USS Somers.

June 1965: Somewhere in the Pacific the last letter written to BettyJo was received and placed on the top of a stack of letters already tied with a blue ribbon and stored in a cardboard box. That box remained in a closet for 31 years.

Continued on P2...Jack & Betty Jo

Continued...Jack & Betty Jo

May 21, 1996: Portland, Oregon. Jack is sorting through papers in his attic when he comes upon the 1964 photo of BettyJo. A photo he carried with him on the USS Somers to Vietnam in 1965. He takes it downstairs.

May 21, 1996: Etna, California. BettyJo is sorting through a cardboard box looking for a stock certificate and finds a large stack of letters tied with blue ribbon. The letters from Jack. She takes them out and reads each one.

Jack never married, wanting only to marry his BettyJo, his first and only true love.

BettyJo married three times, unsuccessfully, searching for the perfect union.

May 24, 1996: Wednesday 7:00 PM. Jack calls BettyJo's brother in Etna, California to, "say hello after all these years." The answering machine picks up and records the message.

Wednesday, 7:25 PM BettyJo's brother calls her to say, "Guess who called? The nicest guy you ever dated."

Wednesday, 7:30 PM, BettyJo calls Jack in Portland and they talk for 2 hours. She invites him to come to California for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend.

May 27, 1996: Jack and BettyJo meet again after 31 years! The spark is fired up and it seems they've never been apart. They burn up the phone lines and the interstate. They are in love again.

September 27, 1996: Thursday, Jack gives BettyJo a gold locket on her lunch hour and they run across the street to the Courthouse where they are married, finally, by the local judge.

September 27, 2010: We celebrated our 14th wedding anniversary and are very much in love.

BettyJo and Jack

Jack is currently awaiting a stem cell transplant to resolve a debilitating disease associated with his exposure to Agent Orange.

The stem cell transplant will be scheduled in near future at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Seattle, Washington.

Jack and BettyJo are currently looking for an apartment or motor home park in the Seattle area for the 4-month stay that will be required of them. The apartment or motor home park must be within 30 minutes, at most, from the VA Medical Center.

Anyone having any contacts in the area, that may be able to assist Jack and BettyJo, should contact them as soon as possible for additional information.

Jack and BettyJo: We all wish you continued happiness and many, many more anniversaries to celebrate. Your picture says it all! Our very best to both of you.

(And the locket looks great)

Your Friends & Shipmates

National Bone Marrow Awareness Month is November. Anyone from 18-60 can be swabbed for DNA to become Blood Stem Cell Donors. It's painless and you may save a life! Anyone wishing additional information should contact Jack Grubb.

Cyclone Racer at The Pike in Long Beach, CA.



Results of the Ballot Voting:

The mail ballot to approve the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association were approved by majority decision. (Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, P.288.)

Of the 33 ballots mailed, 21 were for approval, 0 for rejection and we had 12 no responses.

Therefore, the Constitution and Bylaws of the USS Somers Crewmembers Association are hereby in effect.

New Address List

We now have 41 shipmates on the address list. I have enclosed a copy of the list for everyone. The new listing includes the following newly listed shipmates.

1. David Anderson (64-66)
2. Royce Branning (60-66)
3. Kip Eisele (62-66)
4. David A. Kaley (64-65)
5. Richard Lindenauer (63-65)
6. Earl B. Robbins (60-64)
7. Bob Thomas (62-65)
8. Larry A. Vance

Note: Being on the address list does not mean the individual is a paid member. We will continue to do mail outs to everyone as long as our funds can support the expense.

Still Searching for Old Shipmates

We have located the following shipmates with good email addresses that have not responded to our emails. If they were friends and you would like to try to make contact, here is the info.

1. MH "Doc" Montgomery sandrisc@aol.com
2. Norm Ferguson (406) 452-2247 fergie2009@live.com
3. Forrest Aschenbrenner forrestasch3386@msn.com
4. Tom Legge weymouthtom@msn.com
5. Stanley Baune (65-66) swbaune@yahoo.com
6. James A. Fox (715) 945-2093 ETR3 (65-66)
jamesafox@earthlink.net
7. Harold Murphy YN2 (64-66) (410) 857-5329
hwmur232@comcast.net
8. Burt Maxson GMG3 burtscolddoor@aol.com
9. Oran Smith QM3 (61-64) mzcrabby2@aol.com
10. Ray Wickman ENS/JG (62-65) rwick2080@cox.net
11. Tom Mayberry SN (63-64) ewmayberry@att.net

An email and attached letter was sent to the above recipients on Saturday, May 22, 2010, 4:00 p.m with no response. Five (5) others were returned as "undeliverable" or "unknown user." They were:

1. Don Howard ETR2 (63-66)
2. Jackie Pence BT2 (oil king) (60-64)
3. Ray McCaw RDSN (62-64)
4. Ray Wickman ENS/JG (62-65)
5. Tyrone Martin XO (64-66)

We have also searched for the following with no luck:

1. Roger Salgado CS3 (62-66) lechefroger@bellsouth.net

Continued on P3.....

Still Searching for Old Shipmates.....con't

2. Don Shane MM1 (64-66) Apple Valley, CA ?
ronido05@earthlink.net
3. Robert M. (Joey) Thomas Stockton, CA ?
4. John D. Adams Marianna, Florida?
5. Raymond W. Fralick New England ?
6. Benedict Michael Greyeagle III Camp Crook,
South Dakota MM3 ?
7. Frank O. Burgess BT1 Reserve, NM ?
8. Robert L. Lewis St. Louis, MO ?
9. Johnny P. Norman MM3 Gurley, AL ?
10. Clarence R. Jenkins MM3
11. Robert H. Falkner BT2
12. Hubert E. Harvel MM1
13. James P. Little MM2 Shreveport, LA ?
14. John E. Martin MM3
15. Gerald G. Walker MM3
16. Donald L. Waller MM1
17. Thomas F. Todd MM2

If you have any additional info on these or other shipmates and would like to continue a search, forward the info to me and we'll do the best we can to locate them.



Some "Somers" History

Somers I: A schooner purchased under the name "Catherine" by the U.S. Navy on Lake Erie (NY) in 1812. Was subsequently captured by the British on 12 August 1814.

Somers II: Launched by the NY Navy Yard on 16 April 1842, was commissioned on 12 May 1842. On 8 December 1846, Somers capsized and floundered in a sudden squall. Thirty-two (32) crewmembers drowned and 7 were captured off of Vera Cruz.

Somers III: A steel torpedo boat, built as a private speculation by Frederico Schichau in Germany. Launched in 1897 and purchased for the U.S. Navy on 25 March 1898. She was commissioned on 28 March 1898 and named "Somers" the next day. Decommissioned on 22 March 1919 and sold for scrap on 19 July 1920.

Somers IV: DD 301 was launched 28 December 1918 and commissioned on 23 June 1920. She was decommissioned on 10 April 1930 and scrapped at Mare Island in 1930 and 1931, with materials sold on 19 March 1931.

Somers V: DD 381 was commissioned at the NY Navy Yard on 1 December 1937. Her shakedown cruise was on 11 February 1938. From 4 August 1945 to 11 September 1945 she was in Charleston, SC for overhaul. Decommissioned 28 October 1945. Struck from the Navy list 28 January 1947. Earned 2 battle stars in World War II.

Somers VI: DD 947 / DDG 34 was laid down 4 March 1957 at Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine. She was launched on 30 May 1958 and commissioned on 9 April 1959. Decommissioned on 11 April 1966 for conversion to DDG. Reclassified on 15 March 1967 and decommissioned 19 November 1982. Stricken 26 April 1988.

*USS Somers Crewmembers Association Reunion 2011***~~~The 2011 Reunion ~~~***Reunion Dates*

The 2nd Annual USS Somers Crewmembers Association reunion dates have been confirmed with our Host and Hostess, Tommy and MaryAnne Goforth.

The dates are **Friday, April 29th through Sunday, May 1st**; **however, early arrivals and late departures are welcomed and expected.**

All members and non-members and their families are welcomed to attend. Don't miss out on this great time. Come and reunite with past shipmates, renew friendships, make new friends and share sea stories, photos of the past and just relive some great times.

You won't regret it. And, you'll have much to share with family and friends back home.

*Eastern Oklahoma**The Place To Be in April 2011:*

The Goforth Ranch

15709 Williams Road

Cameron, Oklahoma



Airports: Ft. Smith Regional Airport, Ft. Smith, Arkansas (25 miles from Tommy's)
Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport (XNA) (85 miles)
Tulsa International Airport (128 miles)

Campground information: There are two local KOA Campgrounds. Ft. Smith/Alma, AR, KOA (479) 632-2704 (37 miles) and Sallisaw, OK, KOA (918) 775-2792 (45 miles).

Call for reservations and availability.

Accommodations

The following information is provided on local accommodations, all pretty close (15 – 20 minute drive) to the reunion site. Make your reservations early and inform the hotel you're with the "USS Somers" reunion.

1. Best Western Traders Inn, 3111 North Broadway, Poteau, OK 74953 (918) 647-4001 Fax: (918) 647-9555. AARP and AAA members get 5% discount. There is a 10% discount if we occupy 10 rooms or more at this hotel only. Complimentary breakfast & handicap accessible. Rates: \$59.49 - \$63.74 + tax. Some smoking rooms. No pets.
2. Holiday Inn and Suites (New Hotel), 201 Hillview Parkway, Poteau, OK 74953 (918) 649-0123, Fax: (918) 649-0124. AARP and AAA members get 5% discount. No Smoking Hotel. Pets ok. Rates are \$104 - \$123 + tax. Complimentary breakfast. Handicap Accessible.
3. Days Inn and Suites, 1702 North Broadway, Poteau, OK 74953. (918) 647-3510 Fax: (918) 647-3511. Some smoking rooms. Pets ok. AARP and AAA get 5% discount. Rates: \$93 - \$115. Complimentary breakfast. Handicap Accessible.

Events

Friday, April 29th 7 P.M. Marias Mexican Restaurant 600 Broadway Street, Poteau, OK. We will all meet in the parking lot in the front of the restaurant. The restaurant is next door to the Best Western Traders Inn.

Saturday, April 30th: Cookout at Tom and MaryAnne's (where we spend most of the time). Grilled steaks and/or Fish Fry. If you have a preference let us know.

Things to think about while we're there: Casino trip: Choctaw Casino 3400 Choctaw Road Pocola, Oklahoma. www.choctawcasinos.com. 1,404 Gaming Machines. 19 Table and Poker Games. Blue Moon Cafe, Café American, Jackpot Java Shop + Sandwiches, and a Buffet.

Directions to the Goforth Ranch: 15709 Williams Road, Cameron, Oklahoma

From Poteau, Oklahoma-Take Hwy 112 North to Cameron. Go 7.3 miles and turn left on Old Hwy 112 (the intersection at the Finish Line Store). Go 1.2 miles and turn left on Williams Road 0.8 miles. 15709 Williams Road on the left.

From Ft. Smith, Arkansas: Take I-540 South to Pocola, OK. Turn left at the stoplight in Pocola onto Hwy 112 South. Go 6.6 miles and turn Right on Williams Road 0.8 miles to 15709 Williams Road on the left.

"Come Early and Stay Late" Its a Great Time "You won't Regret It"

Membership Dues Reminder: The membership year is April 1 to March 31. We currently have forty-one (41) shipmates on the Association’s mailing list. Of those 41 individuals, 26 are paid members. Those not paid represent \$750 that could support reunion activities and future member supported activities. Your dues pay for the expenses associated with this newsletter and mail outs to everyone on the list, non-members included. Please forward your dues, if you can, so we can continue to provide you with information that will keep you in touch with your friends and shipmates. Thanks.



Richard Somers
Master Commandant
1778-1804

Richard Somers was born at Somers Point, New Jersey on September 15, 1778. He received his warrant as midshipman on April 30, 1798, and shortly thereafter was assigned to the frigate “United States” under the command of Commodore John Barry.

During the Tripolitan War, he commanded the schooner “Nautilus” in the Mediterranean, being promoted to Master Commandant in 1804. He also commanded one of the gunboat divisions in the many attacks on the Tripolitan naval forces in the harbor of Trinoli.

During these operations, the ketch “Intrepid” was converted into a fire ship and filled with a large quantity of powder and explosives. On the night of September 4, 1804, “Intrepid” under Somers command and a crew of volunteers were sent in to be exploded among the enemy’s shipping in the hope of destroying gunboats and perhaps the town itself. Unfortunately, she was sighted by the Tripolitans, who opened fire and prematurely blew her up. The daring crew all perished.

Congress passed a “resolution of sympathy” for the relatives of Somers and his men. A monument to the memory of Somers and his brave companions stands on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland.



Biography Section: If you don’t mind sharing a little of your past with our shipmates, send me your bio and we’ll start publishing them in the Newsletter.

Bob & Martha (Marty) Plante: Married: December 3, 1983. Two boys, Ryan, age 22, a Senior at the State University of New York at Oswego and Corey, age 20, a Freshman at Onondaga Community College, Syracuse, NY. Following Bob’s 4 year Navy enlistment, he enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard, serving 8 years and achieving the rank of Machinery Technician First Class (MK1) and recognized as the 1978 Coast Guardsman of the Year. Honorably discharged on May 11, 1978 due to disabilities, he went to work for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV),

assisting veterans in acquiring VA and Social Security benefits. He began his career with DAV in Buffalo, NY as a National Service Officer (NSO), was promoted to the Board of Veterans Appeals in Washington, DC as a National Appeals Officer and later to Assistant Supervisor of the New York City office. He was Supervisor of the Chicago, IL office and in 1998 became a member of the Staff at DAV National Service & Legislative Headquarters in Washington, DC. He retired in November 2004 as Assistant National Service Director and relocated to upstate (central) New York.



U.S. Navy Traditions

Some Things Never Change!

Little Known Naval History

The U.S.S. Constitution (Old Ironsides), as a combat vessel carried 48,600 gallons of fresh water for her Crew of 475 officers and men. This was sufficient to last 6 months of sustained operations at sea. She carried no evaporators (fresh water distillers). However, let it be noted that according to her log, "On July 27, 1798, the U.S.S. Constitution sailed from Boston with a full complement of 475 officers and men, 48,600 gallons of fresh water, 7,400 cannon shot, 11,600 pounds of black powder and 79,400 gallons of Rum." Her mission: "To destroy and harass English shipping." Making Jamaica on 6 October, she took on 826 pounds of flour and 68,300 gallons of Rum. She then headed for the Azores, arriving there on 12 November. She provisioned with 550 pounds of beef and 64,300 gallons of Portuguese wine. On 18 November, she set sail for England. In the ensuing days she defeated five British men-of-war and captured and scuttled 12 English merchantmen, salvaging only the Rum aboard each. By 26 January, her powder and shot were exhausted. Nevertheless, and though unarmed, she made a night raid up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland. Her landing party captured a whiskey distillery and transferred 40,000 gallons of single malt Scotch aboard by dawn. Then she headed home. The U.S.S. Constitution arrived in Boston on 20 February 1799 with NO cannon shot, NO food, NO powder, NO Rum, NO wine, NO whiskey and 38,600 gallons of **stagnant** water.

Go Navy

The following is an actual radio conversation released by the US Chief of Naval Operations on 10 October 1995:

NAVY: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision.

Civilian: Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to South to avoid a collision.

NAVY: This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course.

Civilian: No. I say again, you divert YOUR course.

NAVY: This Is The Aircraft Carrier Enterprise. We Are A Large Warship Of The United States Navy. DIVERT YOUR COURSE NOW!

Civilian: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

Definition of a Veteran

A Veteran, whether active duty, retired, National Guard or Reserve, is someone who, at one point in his or her life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America" for an amount of "up to and including my life." That is Honor, and there are way too many people in this Country who no longer understand it. Author Unknown