

USS Midway--Scope Dope News

DING DING --- DING DING ---SCHOOLBOY'S OI DIVISION, CIC OFFICERS AND OTHERS ARRIVING



2009 Orlando Reunion

The 2009 reunion will be held April 23-25, 2009, in Orlando, Florida, at the Hilton/Orlando Altamonte Springs Hotel. Clay Sponseller and Jim Hayter are going to co-host the reunion, with help from Bill Kruper and Joe Reiter. Ron McPhail has rallied well from his health problems, but his vision is still sub-par, so he has agreed to be our behind-the-scenes advisor and plans to attend. Ron rates the Altamonte Springs Hotel as five-stars with two thumbs up, based on his knowledge and experience in the area. Clay is in the process of getting the details on rates, etc. from the Altamonte, and that information will be passed along to the reunion group as soon as it becomes available. So what we do know at this early-planning stage are the date and the place of the reunion. Also, according to Clay, those of us with modern, 21st century technology, such as computers, will be able to make room reservations online. The Altamonte Hotel's web address follows, but don't try to reserve your room yet because the final package deal hasn't been confirmed with the hotel. The URL for the Altamonte Hotel is:

http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/ALTAHHE-F-Hilton-Orlando-Altamonte-Springs-Florida/index.do

2008 Dues Due

Now hear this! Now hear this! 2008 dues for the OI Division Reunion Group, USS Midway, are due immediately if not sooner, payable by check to Oscar Granger, who has taken over the duties of secretary/treasurer for the reunion group. Annual dues, of course, are what keeps our reunion group afloat (no pun intended), so, yes, the dues are important. Please make your check payable to **Oscar Granger, Midway Reunion**, and mail to Oscar at 44434 S.E. 142nd Pl., North Bend, WA, 98045. A separate flier is included with this newsletter to remind us that dues are due.

Sea Story Conscription Program

Editor's note: Hereby and henceforth you will be required to send the editor of this newsletter a sea story if he calls upon you (via email or telephone) to do so. As featured in this issue of *Scope Dope News*, in future issues, sea stories from your shipmates will be interspersed throughout the newsletter. Such stories, tall tales though they may be, help in the passing on of information among the group members and add to the overall knowledge base and legacy of the group. Besides, they look good and are funny.

Missiles Away, My Boys!

The Mission Impossible: knock a bus-size spy satellite out of its fast-fading orbit in outer space with a three-stage missile before it enters the Earth's atmosphere and does damage to someone or something on the ground. The United States Navy was called upon to do the job, and the sharp-shooting missile-men on the guided missile cruiser

USS *Lake Erie* (CG-70), armed with an SM-3 missile, vaporized the spy satellite with a single shot while it was still 130 miles out in space, scoring a direct hit and reducing the satellite to bits and pieces that burned up harmlessly in the atmosphere. With this impressive display of weaponry in hand, the United States of America, the U.S. Navy, and the USS *Lake Erie* sent a clear message to the World: Try to sneak one in on us and you'll get a "surprise package" sent back your way in a hurry. It's one more reason that we are proud to be Navy vets. Once again we have led by example. Go Navy!



Jim Kelly's Sea Story

It was Christmastime 1948. I was from a small town in Massachusetts. I'd never been more than 20 miles from home, was just a boot and I was a target for all the duty that came up. As it happened I drew the mid-watch Christmas Eve. It was my first time away from home on Christmas, and I was feeling low and sorry for myself. Along about 0200 the officer of the watch came to the fantail. He had a bag of candy canes. He gave me one and wished me a Merry Christmas and went on with his rounds. I felt better after that. I was not alone, we had the duty, and we had our orders. I said, Jim, this is the Navy you swore to serve. I grew up at that moment and I never felt bad again when I had to miss a holiday at home. I was home one time for Christmas in my 5 years of service.

Revamp of Scope Dope Website Under Way

Shipmate Craig Harper, with the concurrence of Webmaster Ron McPhail and the computer savvy to pull it off, is reconstructing the Scope Dope Web site, and is well along on this project. View the site at <http://ussmidway.net/home.html>. This is a work in progress, so please contact Craig with your ideas on content and design. (Also, he's looking for 2007 reunion pictures to post on the new site, in jpg or tiff format.) Craig's contact information can be found in the "Masthead" on the last page of this newsletter.



Welcome New Shipmate:

Gary L. Phillips, Jonesboro, Georgia
Gary was an OS3. onboard '75-'77
e-mail: glyphillips@bellsouth.net

Midway Memorabilia

Bill Kruper is still working on getting our Midway memorabilia program back in operation. Memorabilia stock has dwindled to just about nothing, Bill reports. So he needs to find another source for the Midway memorabilia. One possible option until we can get our own supply going again is to order Midway memorabilia directly from the USS Midway Store site at <http://enssc.com/?store=502> (linked from the Midway Museum site).

loose below us from where we are standing above with Mabry. It is dark down there and we can't see. As the officer in charge, Mabry tells us shore patrol to stop the fight. We yell, "knock it off down there!" They started to grab at us so we backed off. Mabry yells at us, "Stop them!" We tell him, "Oh, no sir, we are here to protect you and believe us, they want us and you!" And I am thinking the whole time, if Oscar was here with me we could have stopped the fight and probably would have gotten medals.



Clay Sponseller's Sea Story

I was fairly new on the U.S.S. *Midway* and we were pulling into Beppu, Japan. As fate would have it, I was in trouble again. I was innocent. Ron McPhail assigned me to shore patrol on our first night in port. When I reported for shore patrol, I saw another trouble maker, Oscar Granger, who was assigned by Ron to do shore patrol also. He was innocent too. But since we were from the same division, they would not let us patrol together. My job was to ride the liberty launch, which is an LST with an officer in charge, which in this case happened to be Jerry Mabry. During the day this duty is OK but as it gets late into the evening and it gets dark and the guys are drunk coming back from liberty, fights start as you pull away from the dock. All of a sudden all hell breaks



Bill Kruper and Oscar Granger display shirt signed by Ron McPhail's shipmates at the 2007 reunion in San Diego. The shirt was presented to Ron after the reunion.

We Will Keep You Posted!





Dave ("The Boot") Payson's Sea Story

During my six-month tour of duty on the U.S.S. *Midway*, which was essentially the '63-'64 West-Pac cruise, I spent most of my time topside on lookout duty, which was fine with me, because it was the best show in town up there, as far as I was concerned. One night we were operating in the Sea of Japan, and I was bridge lookout during the mid-watch. During the day we had played war games with the U.S.S. *Kitty Hawk* and, not surprisingly, had kicked her butt in every competition. Our standing orders on this night were to keep a close lookout for the *Kitty Hawk* to make sure she didn't sneak up on us for a little "payback." Clay Sponseller was on the sound-powered phones to me from CIC, and he kept me entertained with a constant stream of chatter over the line like only he could do, warning me that I better not fall asleep at the switch and let the *Kitty Hawk*, which he called the P---y Hawk, sneak in on us. At about 0200 hours, I picked up a visual contact on the horizon through my 10X binoculars. Whatever kind of ship it was, it was huge and running dark, barely visible, moving fast. Excitedly, I reported my sighting to the bridge officer and then to Sponsel-

ler. The longer I studied the ship the more convinced I became that it was the *Kitty Hawk*. The Officer of the Deck called the Captain to the bridge. "Eleven miles and closing fast!" Sponseller reported from CIC. I relayed this information on to the OD. I don't remember anyone on the bridge asking me if CIC thought that the ship was the *Kitty Hawk*, but someone must have, because the Captain sounded GQ and all Hell broke loose as the crew scrambled to their battle stations. Although most of them were still half asleep, they were *always* ready to have some fun with the *Kitty Hawk*. But it turned out to be a Japanese freighter, not the *Kitty Hawk*. We stood down from GQ and the crew returned to their racks, grumbling. Three days later, Leading Petty Officer Ron McPhail sent me mess cooking. He claims he has a very vague memory of this, which isn't surprising considering what he had been through in our previous port-of-call, Yokosuka, Japan. What happened to him there is described in his sea story in this newsletter, which when you read it you can't help but wonder what kind of role model this guy was to us as our LPO. My stint on the mess decks turned out great because they made me into a "forward compartment cleaner," which was skating duty. But that's a whole other story.



Some Midway guys hanging around the bar at the reunion dinner, looking pretty serious about their business



Oscar "Oz" Granger's Sea Story

We'd been struggling during the at-sea period on Yankee Station in July and August of 1965. There were many of us short-timers in the division who were waiting to get into Olongapo to be separated from the ship and return home. Two or three of the guys were supposed to be flown off the ship. This was one of our longer at-sea periods and I believe we were out for more than 30 days, which was unusual for us. About mid-way through the at-sea period, SecNav extended all of us shorttimers to the delight of the 'lifers' - McPhail, Chief Moyer, and so on! We were thoroughly demoralized at this point and no one was much for anything more than just getting ourselves through the extension period, which was supposed to last for several months, and then get out. A few days after the extensions were announced, SecNav announced that anyone that had an 'early-out' approved prior to the announcement of the extensions would be released. I had received my acceptance for college and was one of a handful of sailors on the ship that would be getting released in Subic. I flaunted the announcement to Ron as our LPO and my section leader and announced he could do anything he wanted to me because I was getting out. He

threatened me with Shore Patrol in Subic and I responded to the effect that he could give me shore patrol every day we were in port (which, it turns out, was 7 or 8 days, as I recall) and I could stand it on my hands! He subsequently took me up on my offer and I stood shore patrol for every day I was in port! But as the ship was getting ready to depart for its next at-sea period, I was walking down the afterbrow and leaving the ship. Ron, however still had the last laugh. When I got to Treasure Island to be separated, Ron must have warned his buddies there that I was coming - I wound up standing Shore Patrol in San Francisco and TI during the week (at least 3 nights) before I was finally separated.



A "bevy" of OI Division women gathered on the Midway flight deck, waiting to catch the next jet downtown to do some shopping.

Don't forget, your 2008 dues are due and payable to Oscar Granger ASAP! (See separate flier mailed with this newsletter for Oscar's mailing address.)

Ship-wide Reunion Group

Scope Dope News contacted Scott McGaugh, marketing director of the USS Midway Museum, to inquire about rumors that a ship-wide reunion group was being started. Scott explained that Midway veterans who join the Midway Museum are effectively doing just that to some degree—that is, joining a ship-wide reunion group. Although it may not be exactly like an informal reunion association (like ours), the official Midway Museum group does offer certain “perks” for Midway veterans, and Scott made us this offer:

“We are still collecting former Midway veterans’ info by offering a complimentary individual membership in the museum for one year . . . folks can send their contact info plus years aboard/work station if they would like to become members for a year at no charge. Technically the deadline is the end of February [2008] but we’ll probably extend. Perhaps you could call it “limited time offer.” Info by Midway veterans can be sent to Amanda McClintock at amclintock@midway.org. Eventually I’d like to see it evolve into an informal reunion association, but for now we want to “collect” Midway veterans and make them part of the broader museum family.”

Scott’s offer to Midway veterans like us is a good one: one year free membership in the Midway Museum, which would allow you to take the program for a “test drive.” Some of you may have received this offer in a mailing from the Midway Museum a couple of months ago, and already signed up. But if you didn’t, here’s another chance. (To take advantage of this offer, send an e-mail to the link above, and Amanda McClintock will let you know what information she needs from you.)



Leading Petty Officer Ron McPhail’s Sea Story

For those that served aboard the Midway during the 1964 cruise, you may remember that during an exercise off the coast of Japan, our aft starboard elevator was snapped off when we made a hard port turn with the elevator down. Anyway, the result of the accident was that we were sent the Yokosuka, Japan, for emergency repairs. Since I didn’t have a Sea and Anchor Detail Station (one of the perks of being LPO), I was able to leave the ship early. One of the first things that everybody had to do (back in 1963/64) was change their money from dollars to Yen. Well, Chief Moyer had a girlfriend in Japan that he was planning on marrying as soon as practical, so he didn’t want to waste any time standing in line changing money. So he asked me to change his money for him, while he got ready for a two-week leave to see his girlfriend. When Don Oliver (beloved RD1) heard this, he also asked me to change money for him. Well, I was taking 2 weeks leave also, so I had a substantial amount that I needed to change as well. I took an AOL bag over with me and changed \$15,000 to yen, which almost filled it up. Now,

back in '63/'64, that would raise an eyebrow or two. I got it all changed, brought it back to the ship to Moyer and Oliver, and then I departed on my leave for "Wine, Women and Song." Now, unfortunately I took that very serious and literally, but to my credit I did last 8 days before collapsing someplace (don't remember where). The SP's took me to the Navy Dispensary. The doctor gave me a B12 shot, made me eat some food and kept me overnight. Then they let me go and I finished my leave, but this time I didn't forget to eat. I returned to the Midway 5 days later—tired, broke, with a smile on my face and ready for sea.



Quilts from the North Land

Helen Kruper first unveiled her quilting talents at the 2007 reunion in San Diego, and she's still hard at it making those beautiful "Crazy Quilts." She has extended her offer to custom-make these quilts (with a Midway theme, if you want) for reunion group members. (See the separate flier mailed with this newsletter for Helen's contact information and price options for the quilts.) What keeps Helen quilting, you ask? Well, try super-sub zero temperatures this winter in her hometown of Hibbing, Minnesota. Under such hostile conditions, she has to keep moving or else she'll freeze up! It's no wonder husband Bill was "California Dreaming" about returning to San Diego to visit

the ship this summer, a plan he reluctantly gave up after researching the high prices of San Diego hotels in the summertime.



Bill Kruper's Sea Story

As I recall it was on the 1962 cruise which left CONUS (Continental UNITED STATES, for those of you who have forgotten), in April of 1962. We took on the usual fresh stores of eggs and good, fresh milk before leaving CONUS, I remember. By the time we got to Subic Bay in the Philippines, the fresh milk had run out. We took on a load of military provisions including what was referred to as "recombined milk," and that's when the action started. It wasn't long at sea before nearly everyone on the ship had diarrhea. I can remember having a list of guys that would be let off watch to go find a "head." I can recall one day in particular when I ran from deck to deck looking for a "head" that had a vacant seat. Thank god I finally found one! The mess hall put out trays of various types of cheese which we were all encouraged to dine on without restriction in the hopes that it would help stem the terrible trots. It's strange how these things anchor their place in your mine, but, this is indeed a "Sea Story" that did happen.

"The Masthead"

USS Midway OI Division
Reunion Group

Published quarterly for and about former OI Division (and other) personnel, their times, and activities aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Midway*.

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A "sub-division" of OI Division vets waiting on the flight deck for the *Midway* to get underway

