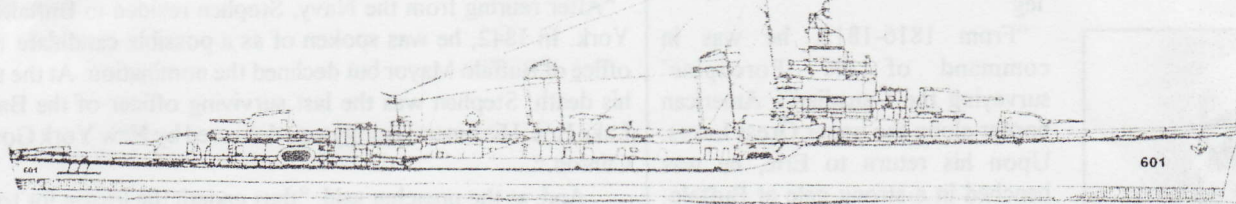


# USS Champlin DD-601



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## THE SEAWEED

Fall 2002

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www.usschamplin.com

### DUES ARE DUE . . . SO DO YOUR DUES

Now hear this: it's that time of the year again. . . time to pay your 2002-2003 dues to the USS Champlin Reunion Group. The annual dues, due each Fall, is still a bargain at only \$15.00. Please send your payment to Norman Prewitt, Sec./Treas., 2049 Eastridge Drive, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024-2869.

### SEAWEED SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE

At the Annual Meeting in Kansas City, MO, the USS Champlin Reunion Group authorized the sale of subscriptions to *The Seaweed* at a cost of \$5.00 per year. Subscriptions are available to those who do not pay annual dues. *This means that after this issue, in order to receive your quarterly issue of The Seaweed, you must be (1) a dues paying member, (2) one of our honorary members or (3) a subscriber.*

Subscriptions to *The Seaweed* are automatically included in your annual dues at no extra cost. Honorary members and widows of shipmates are considered full members without paying dues, so their subscription is considered paid. All others must be a subscriber to receive the *Seaweed*. To subscribe, please complete the enclosed order blank and send it along with your payment to Norman Prewitt at the address above.

### USS CHAMPLIN - THE NAME AND THE MAN

In the last issue of the *Seaweed*, we presented the second in a series of articles describing the life and times of Stephen Champlin, the man after whom the USS Champlin was named. We ended that article with the paragraph: "Put-In-Bay, January 14, 1814. Sir: I have everything in complete order at this place. I have the guns mounted in the block-house. I have mounted on board the 'Detroit' 21 guns, and on board the 'Queen Charlotte' 19. I have mounted those 32-pounders and 24 pounders that were left on board the 'Detroit'. I can bring 12 guns to bear in every direction. The ice is constantly kept open. I think if they attack us they will meet with a pretty warm reception. The sailors are all well, the soldiers very sickly. We have provisions enough to last till the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. The beef is very bad. I have the honor to be Your Ob'dt Humble Servant Stephen Champlin".

We now complete the story with this final article.

"In the spring of 1814, Stephen, now in command of the 'Tigress' (along with Captain Turner who now commanded the 'Scorpion') blockaded Port Mackinac. Their two vessels cruised Lake Huron for several months and cut off supplies to the British garrison. Both ships were captured on the night of September 3, 1814 near Midland, Ontario by a combined force of one hundred British and three hundred Indians who first approached the 'Tigress' by canoe under the cover of darkness. By the time they were spotted by the crew of the 'Tigress' it was too late. The British then sailed toward the 'Scorpion' with the American flag still flying and the British dressed in American uniforms. Just after dark, the 'Tigress' anchored about two miles from the 'Scorpion'. Shortly before sun rise the next day, the 'Tigress' raised anchor and moved toward the 'Scorpion'. When they got within 10 yards, the disguised British open fire with their muskets then swarmed aboard the 'Scorpion'. The battle only lasted a few minutes. Stephen was severely wounded by a canister shot through the thigh, which shattered the bone - crippling him for life. He was taken prisoner and held at Mackinac for 38 days before being paroled and sent first to Erie and later back home to Connecticut to die. The captured American vessels were renamed: 'Scorpion' became the 'Confidence' and 'Tigress' became 'Surprise'. They remained in British service until 1817 when the Rush-Bagot Treaty was signed banning armed warships from the Great Lakes. The two ships were then scuttled in Penetanguishene Harbor.

"At the close of the War of 1812, the U.S. Congress presented a sword to: 'Captain Stephen Champlin, a cousin of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. Captain Champlin was commander of the 'Scorpion' and Acting Sailing Master of the fleet during the Battle of Lake Erie. The grip and guard of this sword are of gold and tooled by a master craftsman. On the single edged blade, on a part of which is etched a scene of the battle, is the inscription: 'Stephen Champlin. Actg. Sailing Master, Lake Erie, 10th September 1813' On the other side of the blade is a Latin text which translated reads: 'He who aims highest, rises highest'. The scabbard is of black leather with ornamented fittings'.

"In January of 1815, Stephen, having recovered (rather than dying) from his wounds, was sent to Connecticut - arriving there in March. There, on March 28th, he was given orders to join Perry's fleet, destined for the Mediterranean to battle the Barbary Pirates off the coast of Algeria and Tunisia.

"In the fall of 1815, in consideration of his wounds, Stephen was ordered to return to Erie in the spring of 1816. There he underwent an arduous operation (for those days) the purpose of which was to



extract the many splinters of shattered bone that still remained in his leg.



Stephen Champlin

"From 1816-1818, he was in command of the 'Porcupine' surveying the Canadian - American border along the upper Great Lakes. Upon his return to Erie, he was beached in a strong gale at Buffalo. During his enforced stay at Buffalo, he met and courted Minerva Lydia Pomeroy whom he married there on January 9, 1817 in a ceremony conducted by the Reverend Miles S. Squire, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. Minerva, a Buffalo socialite and daughter of Ralph and Lydia (-?- ) Pomeroy, was born on June 28, 1798 and died on

June 8, 1859. She and Stephen had children: Oliver Hazard Perry (1818); Jane Elizabeth (1821); Stephen Raymond (1823); Lydia Minerva (1825); Ellen Elizabeth (1827); Thomas Able Pomeroy (1829); William B. (1831) and James Harvey (1839).

"In the spring of 1818, Stephen was compelled to undergo yet another operation on his leg for the removal of additional bone splinters. He was then detached from the Naval station at Erie and allowed (because of his health) to return to Connecticut until November of 1828.

"In November of 1828, Stephen was briefly put in command of the steamer 'Fulton' at New York, serving as her Captain until December 30th at which time it was decided that his leg made him unfit for such duties (he had undergone three more operations). He returned to Connecticut, remaining there until 1834 at which time he returned to Buffalo.

"In 1838, during the 'Patriot War', he was put in command of the military force that was sent, along with the steamers 'Robert Fulton' and 'New England', to prevent the developing invasion of Canada by private forces. These forces had as their goal, the liberation of Canada from the yoke of British colonialism. That the Canadian's did not want to be 'free' was a fact overlooked or ignored and the American government found it necessary to head off this invasion before it precipitated yet another war with England. On January 25, 1838 Champlin's ships broke through the ice of the Buffalo Creek and proceeded up the lake. They captured many of the deluded 'liberators' and averted further blood shed.

"In the winter of 1842, Commander Stephen Champlin was placed in charge of the newly established navy recruiting center at Buffalo. After less than four months, he had signed up 400 apprentices, seamen and ordinary seamen for navy duty.

"Captain & Mrs. Champlin resided on Seneca Street in Buffalo for many years as did many of that city's best citizens in those days, and their house was well known for suppers and card parties.

"In 1843, the 'U.S.S. Michigan', which was the first ironclad steam warship to sail the Great Lakes, was launched at Erie. She was 168 feet in length with a beam width of 68 feet, a 10 foot draft and 600 ton displacement. Her first commander was William Inman. On November 4, 1845, Stephen Champlin succeeded him as commander and served in that capacity until March 31, 1848 when he was

replaced by James M. McIntosh.

"After retiring from the Navy, Stephen resided in Buffalo, New York. In 1842, he was spoken of as a possible candidate for the office of Buffalo Mayor but declined the nomination. At the time of his death, Stephen was the last surviving officer of the Battle of Lake Erie. His funeral eulogy was delivered by New York Governor Clinton."

And, as the preacher said, "thus endeth the lesson for today". Hope you enjoyed it. Many thanks to Robert Champlin, the Erie County Historical Society and shipmate Gerald M. Cruthers for their assistance in researching and publishing this article.

## KOREAN WAR MEDAL

From a recent issue of the Rochester (NY) Democrat and Chronicle, we learn that the Republic of Korea is offering American veterans of the war the *Korean War Service Medal*. South Korea first offered the medal to United Nations forces in 1951, but at that time, U.S. law prohibited military men and women from wearing foreign medals. By the time the law was changed in 1954, most Americans had returned home. In 1998, South Korea renewed its offer. A year later, the U.S. Defense Department approved wearing the medal. To qualify for the medal, veterans must have (1) served between June 25, 1950, and July 27, 1953, (2) been on permanent assignment or temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days and (3) served in Korean territory, in adjacent waters or in Korean airspace. USS Champlin shipmates, called back during the Korean War, should contact their local congressman/woman for more information. You will also need to provide a copy of your discharge papers.

## FRENCH THANK YOU CERTIFICATES

George A. Hanson RdM2c advises he has received a certificate from the French Consulate as a "thank you" for his participation in the liberation of France. The details of this certificate are somewhat sketchy to the Seaweed, but apparently the French Consulate launched a "Thank You America" program in 1994, as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day. The French Consulate awards the certificate to anyone in the US armed services who participated directly in the liberation of France. George Hanson was one of over 300 World War II veterans honored by the French government at a ceremony in Eau Claire, WI. Shipmates aboard the Champlin during the invasion of Southern France qualify for this award, according to George. Seaweed suggests contacting the French Consulate or your local representative and/or senator for their assistance in obtaining your certificate.

## .. AND IN THE NEWSPAPER

From the Thursday, October 24, 2002 edition of The Journal, published in Cass County, MO just south of Kansas City, page 4 Jack Lindberg, (nephew of Glenn Ecklund) writes:

"They greeted each other with grins and smiles. Their handshakes were firm. They held the handshakes a little longer than most. Their eyes would meet and lock. They did not hug. These were the men



of the destroyer USS Champlin. These men met for the first time during World War 2. The former shipmates held their annual reunion a week ago at Embassy Suites at KCI Airport. They have held 22 such reunions. It took until 1980 until someone decided there should be a reunion for the Champlin. The ship's crew at any one time was 250 to 300 sailors. Someplace or another is a roster of all who served on the ship. That's about 800 men. There were 19 of them at the reunion this year. Next year in Nashville who knows? 'Well, most of them are dead', said one. 'These men are 80 and up. I call one every year and he says he's not coming to any reunion.' So, 19 is not the remaining crew. 'There are quite a few living', said Glenn Ecklund of Media PA., 'but for one reason or another'. If he finished the sentence it would have been medical or other reasons for not attending.

"To be truthful, only 18 of them sailed on the Champlin. Hal Medvedeff who lives near Annapolis, MD, is an honorary crew member. He was one of the 197 men the Champlin picked up from the Atlantic Ocean. He was aboard a troop ship that sunk while on a convoy headed for the invasion of North Africa. The Champlin saved them all. The Champlin also participated in the invasion of Sicily, Italy and France.

"The Champlin was on service only six years. It was retired in 1948 and rested in the Philadelphia Navy Yard until 1970 when it was sold to a Houston company for \$70,000.

"Medvedeff is worth a movie. Born in Moscow and partly raised in China. Speaks Russian, French, Polish and German and English without an accent. Most of his career was in the air commercial piloting after his military flying as a bomber pilot. He served in Moscow as an attache and was one of three sent to the Potsdam Conference as an interpreter. Stalin, Hal said would only allow one U.S. interpreter to stand behind the U. S. delegation during the talks, and because of being born Russian, Medvedeff was not the man. They all remembered one shipmate who was a great sailor but easily heard when he returned from shore leave because of all the siren.

"They all had shore leave stories.

"The men of the Champlin shake off that they were heroes. They simply say that they were boys. 'A man of 30 was an old man', one said.

"Tom Brokaw wrote of them as "The Greatest Generation." It's true.

"The Champlin was named for Stephen Champlin, who served with distinction and honor under Admiral Oliver Hazzard Perry, winning the battle of Lake Erie.

"The destroyer made 13 crossings of the Atlantic with convoys. It rammed and destroyed three German subs. It's the DD601 to the men who served.

"Norman Prewitt of Excelsior Springs was the closest [Ed. Lived nearest Kansas City] of the 19 at the reunion. He had to get his parents permission to enlist at age 17 in 1944.

"Ol' Lindy doesn't mind crying in public anymore. This was a magnificent event. The nation remains indebted."

## B & B

No, no, not Bed and Breakfast... it's Baughan and Beck. In our last issue, Goddard Beck said, "... I also remember Lt. Baughan went up the East River at 15 knots to the Navy Yard and dry dock, and got

a citation for too much speed" Bob Baughan replies, "Goddard Beck's recollection of our dash from Gravesend Bay (offloading ammo) to dry dock in Brooklyn (to fix gash in our port side) brought to mind the definite unease I felt standing beside the pilot on the bridge. He was racing to beat a deadline to get the ship 'over the sill' (dry dock entrance) before the tide ebbed anymore. I didn't get a citation for speeding; he might have. As I recall, he had us doing 20 knts part of the time. I made sure he had a steady flow of bearing on any ships coming our way. If we had tangled with a Staten Island ferry, we would have gone 'kerplunk' - no ballast whatsoever. Thanks to Goddie for the memory. I wonder if he was in the engine room that special sea detail."

## McMENNAMIN RECALLS

"I've been meaning to write to you since reading the Spring 2002 and Winter 2002 editions of Seaweed.

"I believe Arnold Simerly's story of the sinking of U-856 April 7, 1944 was a bit inaccurate. I was the gunner on the 20mm just forward of the bridge and behind mount two. I remember vividly the order to 'stand by for a ram' and the German crewmen jumping into the water. However, his report of the fatalities was incorrect. Commander Shaffer was the only one killed and buried at sea. A few crew-members were slightly injured by the shrapnel that killed the Captain. I had the mid-watch in the radio shack that night and briefly witnessed the Doctor operating on Captain Shaffer in the wardroom in an attempt to save his life.



Jim McMennamin 1945

"I read with great interest Steve Anastasion's story on the plane action during Operation Dragoon. Again, my GQ station was gunner on the 20 mm just forward of the bridge and I could hear everything that was going on in the bridge. I heard the entire conversation and heard Steve say, "Switch to Radar". The mounts began tracking and shortly thereafter opened fire and after about two or three rounds the plane burst into flames and fell into the sea

"I went aboard the Champlin in November 1943. I was stationed at NOB Londonderry, Ireland following graduation from Radio School in Boston, MA in July 1943 as a Radioman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class. I was bored with the duty in Ireland and put in for a transfer or swap onto a destroyer. I guess someone wanted off destroyer duty as badly as I wanted out of Londonderry. So, in November I went aboard the Champlin and remained aboard until I was chosen to go onto the staff of the flag unit of Commander Destroyer Squadron 16 of which the Champlin was a part.

"The flag used to move from one ship to another from time to time, time so I was subsequently transferred to the USS Frankfort and the USS Murphy.

"I certainly enjoy reading the Seaweed. Keep up the good work."

Editors Notes: The photo of Jim McMennamin is from the David Price Collection. Jim is correct regarding the Arnold Simerly story. Bob Baughan noted the error and suggested Arnold, or the reporter



may have confused the fatalities with Arnold's earlier experience aboard the USS Bernadou. The reader must also keep in mind that the interview took place during Arnold's illness, which, along with his abundant experiences, may have added to some confusion of details.

### A GRANDSON REMEMBERS

Speaking of Arnold Simerly, this message, via the log on the USS Champlin web site, is from his grandson, Jason Hathaway: "My grandfather, Arnold Simerly served on the USS Champlin DD-601. He enjoyed telling me of his many battles fought in the war. He had seen six major battles and countless skirmishes, but the asbestos he stripped from the hull of the Champlin would inflict his only wound, a spot on his liver that would never go away. He died this past Sunday, August 29, 2002 at the age of 80. If anyone remembers my grandfather, please feel free to contact me at my e-mail address ([talon26@hotmail.com](mailto:talon26@hotmail.com)). I would like to thank you all for the protecting the freedoms that we take too often for granted. God bless you all and God bless America!"

### HUGH BAKER'S RECOLLECTIONS

Hugh Baker CMM writes, "To make this real boring I have to drop back a few years. My career did not start with the Champlin. I came off the farm during the great depression, came to Florida and worked in the fruit harvest at Lake Wales for one year. From there I went to Jacksonville, Florida around 1935 and got a job in a large ice plant making ice cubes. They weighed 300 pounds. My wages were \$1.00 per day and I worked seven days per week. All life support came from this job. I worked at this for about 1 year. It was hard work but having been raised on the farm I was used to hard work. A co-worker and I were walking downtown one day and came by the Federal Building, thought we would take a peek inside, and there stood a large painting of a Marine in his blue uniform. He looked real good. My buddy says, 'Baker, let's join the Marines'. I said, 'What do they do?'. He says, 'I don't know but he looks like he don't do much'. I said, 'OK, let's check it out.' A guy at the door told us where to go. We entered a room and a Sargent sat at the desk sifting papers, and he asked 'What can I do for you guys?' I said, 'We would like to join the Marines.' He said, 'Sorry men. I got nothing for you right now. Go down the hall, maybe the Navy will take you.' So, we ambled down the hall and a large sign said 'Join the Navy and See the World'. The Chief Petty Officer at the desk asked us what we wanted. We said, 'We want to join the Navy.' 'Why do you want to join the Navy', he asked. 'Well, the sign said join to see the world, and that's us', we said. 'First tell me something about yourself', he said. I told him about being on the farm. 'Hmmm', he said, 'what did you do on the farm?' I explained the neighing, mooing, clucking, oinking, rooster crowing every morning at daylight. 'Sounds real good', he said. On the floor was a piece of iron the size of a shoe box, with a handle on the top of it. 'Can you lift that block over your head', he asked. I looked at it and said, 'Maybe'. He said, 'Try it'. I picked it up and pushed it over my head. He said, 'Enough' on my third push. We took off our shirts and he circled around us, saying, 'Not very fat are you.' We had to agree with him; we were lifting 300 pound blocks of ice seven days a week - more brawn than brains.

He then said, 'There is one more thing to do, and that's getting at least a 70 on a written test.' I took the test, my first time at such a task. Everything seemed to go well until I hit multiple choice. I read that over until I said to myself, 'This is where it ends.' So I read them over and over until I decided to pick the ones I like best, went back and marked them, turned in my paper and waited. He finally came back and I waited for him to tell me goodbye. But, he said looking at me, 'You passed; your score is 72'. And to my buddy, he said, '74.' 'Now', he said, 'I will take some information that I need to send to the Department of the Navy'. A list was provided to us. He put us on a waiting list. This was in September 1936. We did not hear anything for the rest of '36. But in January '37 a letter came from Macon, Georgia to return to the recruiting office in Jacksonville, Florida for further transfer to Norfolk Virginia Training Station, 'You have been accepted by the Navy'. The trip to Virginia to the Navy Base was followed by thirteen weeks of training, then to Unit J Chain Gang, then transfer to the USS Vega for further transfer to the Pacific Fleet. Zipping along at nine knots, I became bored doing nothing. One day the engineering officer came by and I asked if I might do something. 'What do you want to do', he asked. 'Something in the black gang', I said. He said, 'I see'. Later a Chief Water Tender called me and took me down to the Fireroom and told the guys, 'Here is a volunteer; give him a job.' I worked with this group as we drifted along. After we passed through the Panama Canal we headed for San Diego. I requested a permanent status on the Vega be granted before we reached San Diego. The Vega was a Navy supply transport going from the east coast to the west coast, all ports of call, out to Guam and to Alaska. This only lasted from May '37 to September '39. I went from fireroom to the crows nest serving in all engineering stations to auxiliary station. In September '39 I was transferred to Philadelphia PA to the USS Buck DD420 under construction. While in Philadelphia we prepared WWI cans for the British Navy. The USS Bush was commissioned May 20, 1940. We went on patrol, and then a trip to Hawaii. Then back to the Atlantic. Can't recall exactly when we entered convoy duty. The Germans were having a turkey shoot in the North Atlantic. As a MM2c I had been assigned to auxiliary station above deck. The things I saw from my station I could not believe. The Bush had a rough time and so did everyone. I served on the Bush until summer of '42, transferred to the Champlin as MM1c at Quincy, where I made CMM assigned to the auxiliary station. Back out on convoy duty. I can say with honesty that during my entire time in the Navy I had no problem with any member I served with, regardless of rank or rate. To describe what we went through would take of lot of time and too much paper. From the North Atlantic to the Med, North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Southern France. The war ended there, back to the States. A position came one day for a CMM to go to Destroyer School at Norfolk, VA. I signed for it and was selected. I arrived at Norfolk on a Thursday and went to my assignment on Monday AM. My name came over the PA system to report to Personnel. I went to see what was up and was told to pack my bags. I was going to Staten Island. A Chief of my rate fell and broke his leg and I would replace him on the F. E. Edwards DD754, almost ready for sea duty. I was assigned to Chief in Charge of the forward engine room. A few days later we headed for the Pacific. Stopped off at Guam and headed for Okinawa. Our job there was forward picket duty between Okinawa



and Japan. Plans were being made to invade Japan when President Truman dropped the atomic bomb that ended the war. Under the Point System I came home. Later went into civil service. Combined service, Navy and Civil Service, 35 years. To end this little draft I would like to say I liked the Navy and every man I served with. I served my country with honor and believe it or not, 4.0 conduct. I turned 88 in July. Getting a bit lumpy. To each person serving our country today, I say good luck and God bless each of you."

### JAMES G. CRAIG'S MEMORIES

James G. Craig MM3c writes, 'Thanks for all the Seaweed you send. My memories of the Champlin are all happy ones. The times Swede Enquist, Bill Chopp and I spent on the weekends at a bed and breakfast at Foley Beach. Catching catfish in the Charles River and cooking them on a hot plate in the engine room. Losing the vacuum on a Saturday morning when the crew was having its picture taken. I cut the steam from the boilers straight to the stacks. It condensed and sprinkled the whole crew as they were having their picture taken. Someone in the fireroom had left a valve cracked open. Going thru the Panama Canal both ways. Buckner Bay, Tokyo, Wake Island. It was all a great experience. Oh yes, I forgot -liberty in Panama was a great treat."

### ROBERT M. JONES RECOLLECTIONS

Robert M Jones RM2c (ATCS) sends along an excerpt from the USS Champlin's press news dated June 4, 1944. "Naval: Friday, June second, targets to northward to Anzio were successfully bombarded by U. S. destroyers Champlin and Mackenzie. Enemy batteries which were firing upon mine sweepers engaged in clearing channel off coast was unsuccessful. Our ships suffered neither damage nor casualties."

Bob recalls the Anzio Beach Swimming Party. "On or about the date listed on the press news item, and after a long hot day at the Anzio beachhead, Champlin laid out of range of enemy guns and a swimming party over-the-side.

"It was required to wear a life-belt, or a kapok filled life preserver. As is known, the kapok in old life vests can soak up a lot of water. After about an hour, it is still doing a pretty good job of keeping head above water, but it should be swapped off for a dry one.

"About the time for all the participants to be in the water, we see the whaleboat patrolling the immediate area with a man with a 30-06 poised and ready. This scene will make a body forget about sharks and enjoy the cold water. However, it is time for someone to yell 'SHARK!!!' Feeling sure that it is just a joke, but who would not race to the cargo net hanging over the side and fight to get back aboard. The water logged life-vest will sure slow a body down.

"I would be very pleased if members of Champlin's ship's company that took part in the swimming party over-the-side at Anzio could add some details to this event."

### ROSTER CHANGES

In order to reduce postage and copier expenses we will not be mailing a revised Reunion Group Roster this year. We encourage you to update your current roster by making the following changes:

**Anastasion, Steve** - Change address to 201 Connecticut Drive., Chocowinity, NC 27817 and e-mail address: [snanastasion@aol.com](mailto:snanastasion@aol.com)

**Baughan, Robert** - e-mail address: [Bbaughan77@aol.com](mailto:Bbaughan77@aol.com)

**Connors, Charles** - change name to Mrs. Charles Connors

**Doty, George J.** - change address to 1831 NE 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Canby, OR 97013-2540

**Esposito, Louis** - change address to 80 High Street, Apt. B-5, East Haven, CT 06512

**Feeney, Mrs. James**, change address to 387 Avenue D, Point, TX 75472-5513

**Grassl, Joseph** - change address to 5627 N 89<sup>th</sup> St. Milwaukee, WI 53225-2609

**Gustin, William** - change telephone area code from (716) to (585)

**Horjus, Marvin** - change address to 2017 Ithaca St. SW, Wyoming, MI 49509-1703

**Hotard, Sidney** - change area code from (504) to (225)

**Johnson, Ted** - Change address to 2606 Anemonie Drive, Loveland, CO 80537-4136 and phone number to (970) 593-9419

**LaVorgna, Bob** - e-mail address: [bakerboss@webtv.net](mailto:bakerboss@webtv.net)

**Lacquement, Victor** - change address to 4360 Florida Avenue, Space 40, Hemet, CA 92544-5206

**Lipfert, Mrs. Ralph** - change address to: 3116 Gracefield Road, Apt. 222, Silver Spring, MD 20904 (301) 586-0818

**Medvedeff, Harold** - change phone # to (410) 674-2217

**Palen, Edward** - change e-mail address to [tarbox@localnet.com](mailto:tarbox@localnet.com)

**Ropog, James** - change name to Mrs. James Ropog, change address to 7444 Cubbage Road, Westerville, OH 43081

**Russell, John** - change address to 9727 SW 188<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Dunnellon, FL 34432-7708

**Wahle, Francis** - change name to Marjory Shine

#### Add the following :

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**Madsen, Arnold H.** QM2c, 52 Grand Fir Drive, Lodi, CA 95242. Wife's name: Gloria

**Manziano, Anthony J. Sr.**, 404 Woodlawn Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07305



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**Mello**, Alfred E., 1905 South Street, Bridgewater, MA 02324-3528 (508) 697-2329.

**Miller**, Edward M., 7 Vista Palm Lane, Vero Beach, FL 32962 (772) 299-7489.

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**Rarick**, Robert O., 244 Mauch Chunk Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252-1735 (570) 668-4791

**Robert**, Emmitt J., 11003 River Road, Ama, LA 70031-2401 (504) 431-9424

**Rogers**, Owen D., S1c, 1935 18<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, Vero Beach, FL 32962 (561) 778-9886

**Sales**, Mrs. Robert E., 265 Chestnut Ridge Road, Rochester, NY 14624-3806 (585) 889-3650

**Smith**, Mrs. James C., 2163 Shelter Beach Road Ext., Mobile, AL 33618-1961 (251) 344-0697

**Turschmann**, Richard, 136 Cooper Lane, Stafford Springs, CT 06076-1314 (860) 684-1313

**Williams**, Richard A., S1c(RdM), 8 Three Pond Road, Wayland, MA 01778 (508) 358-7964 Wife's name: Cynthia. e-mail address: [cyndickwms@aol.com](mailto:cyndickwms@aol.com)

**Zielomski**, Mrs. Anthony V., 248 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, PA 19602-2402 (610) 374-6581

**Delete** the following: (Deceased, no known widow)

**Horbett**, James J. GM3c

**Kravchuk**, William CEM

**Simerly**, Arnold WT1c

**Nelms**, Morris, Sr. MM3c

If you feel you must have a new Reunion Group Roster, send your request to Norman Prewitt, Sec/Treas., USS Champlin Reunion Group, 2049 Eastridge Drive, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024-2869, enclosing a postage paid, self-addressed envelope

## WILLIAM CLIFFORD GILLETTE

The following message was posted on the USS Champlin web site by Doris Foiles, daughter of William Clifford Gillette. "My father served on the USS Champlin. He enlisted from Montana in March 1942, and was discharged in Bremerton, Washington in Oct 1945. He was (I

think) an Electrician's Mate, EM2c. His name was William Clifford Gillette, I have been looking for information on his ship, and the men he served with, to put into a scrapbook. I don't have any pictures of him during his time in the Navy, it would be greatly appreciated if someone had one with him in it. It has been great to find information on the ship, and find pictures of it on this site. Please feel free to contact me anytime."

If any of our readers has a photograph of William C. Gillette, please send it along to me and I will forward it to Mrs. Foiles. Thanks for any help you can give.

## MORE ON THE U-856

John B. Cowen recalls, "In general I enjoyed my time on the Champlin very much. The momentous action in which we rammed and sank the German U-boat and in which our beloved Captain was killed. I can say when the shrapnel started ricocheting around the port bridge wing, Raleigh Hollingsworth SM1c and I dived for the wheelhouse but Captain Shafer was coming out. We stopped - Hollingsworth took shrapnel in his butt, the Captain took a lethal dose in his stomach and I was untouched. I was the Captain's talker and I advised CIC about the Captain and dared suggest that Mr. Baughan come to the bridge which he did. He performed coolly and professionally. Chief Powell was called to the bridge to get the Captain to the wardroom where the doctor was preparing to operate. Powell was terrific - he quickly determined we could not take the Captain down the ladder because that would cause the Captain too much pain. I remember Powell kneeling down and saying to the Captain he was going to lower him on the stretcher over the side and he should not be concerned when he would swing out over the rough sea caused by the rather violent movement of the bridge. I remember the Captain smiling at Powell and saying he had full confidence in him. In getting him down, he did swing out but ready hands below the bridge quickly brought him in and that part was a total success. Unfortunately, as you know, the rest of the story has a bad ending."

John also tells me that this has been a very troublesome year for him and his wife, Virgie. Virgie went to the hospital with pneumonia, but while there picked up an unusual hospital "bug". After three weeks they moved her by ambulance to the UNC hospital in Chapel Hill. After a week's stay there they licked the "bug" and she was allowed to go home. She lost a lot of weight and was quite weak. She is now slowly regaining her strength. Their son convinced them they should sell their home in Pinehurst, NC and move closer to him in the Coral Gables area of Florida. So, they are moving this month, leaving their "dream house" on the day before Thanksgiving. John has developed macular degeneration in both eyes and is restricted to no night driving; driving under 50 MPH, and no driving on the interstate... so he now has his car for sale as well. He promises to let us know of their new address when they find their new home. Their present address is good for a year - that is, the US Postal Service will forward first-class mail for that time period. And then he wrote a PS that we all can understand: "P.S. Didn't intend to write so much but once started, hard to quit."

\* \* \* \* \*



## REUNION GROUP NEWS

### CHAMPLIN REFERENCES

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*Hitler's U-boat War, The Hunted 1942-1945*, Clay Blair, Random House, Pg. 56.  
*Janes Fighting Ships of World War II*, published 2001 by Random House Group, Ltd., Pg. 282  
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*The Battle of the Atlantic 1939-1943*, Volume I, Samuel E. Morison, Little, Brown & Co., Pages 357 and 358.  
*The Two Ocean War*, Adm. Samuel E. Morison, Little, Brown & Co., Page 362.  
*U-Boats Destroyed*, Paul Kemp, Arms & Armor, pgs. 107, 181.  
*United States Destroyer Operations in World War II*, Theodore Roscoe, (1953) Naval Institute Press, pages 282, 302, 320, 321, 335, 375 and 545.

World War II Encyclopedia.

#### Magazines:

*Sea Classics*, Challenge Publications, Vol. 32 #9, March 1999, "Red Anzio" by Irwin J. Kappes.

#### Newspapers/Newsletters:

*The Tin Can Sailor*: Vol. 25, No. 1, page 3.  
*The Tin Can Sailor*: Vol. 25, No. 4, page 32.

#### Internet:

<http://uboat.net/boats/u130.htm>

<http://uboat.net/boats/u856.htm>

[www.u-boat-archiv.de](http://www.u-boat-archiv.de)

[www.usschamplin.com](http://www.usschamplin.com)

[www.destroyers.org](http://www.destroyers.org) (Tin Can Sailors Web Site)

### CHAMPLIN SHIP'S STORES

**Baseball style cap**, specify either navy blue with white lettering or white with navy blue lettering. "USS Champlin DD-601": \$10.00 including shipping. Also, 3" diameter cloth emblems (patches), navy blue and gold (can be sewn on ties, jackets, caps, etc.): \$3.00 including shipping. In stock. Order from Norman Prewitt, 2049 East Ridge Drive, Excelsior Springs, MO 64024-2869, (816) 630-7272.  
**Sweatshirt, T-shirt and light weight jacket** with large action picture of the USS Champlin DD-601 at sea, imprinted in navy blue. Sweatshirt: \$15.00, T-shirt \$7.50 and Jacket \$19.00. In stock. Order from Robert E. McAfee, 817 Winters Street, West Palm Beach, FL 33405-4545 (561) 586-8389

### REPORTING ABOARD

**Miller**, Edward M., GM3c, 7 Vista Palm Lane, Vero Beach, FL 32962, (772) 299-9489 E-mail: hottotroteddie@aol.com

**Ragusa**, Joseph A. S1c, 67 Charles Street, Tappan, NY 10983 (845) 359-0815

**Rogers**, Owen D., S1c, 1935 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. W., Vero Beach, FL 32962 (561) 778-9886

**Williams**, Richard A. S1c(Rdm), 8 Three Pond Road, Wayland, MA

01778 (508) 358-7964. cyndickwms@aol.com (Cynthia)

### GONE . . . TOO SOON

**Allen**, Robert d. 11/23/2001  
**Glass**, Norman Robert d. 09/06/2001  
**Higgins**, Donald George d. 10/6/2001  
**Horbet**, James Joseph d. 3/16/2002  
**Kravchuk**, William (n) d. 7/4/2001  
**Powell**, Burgess Eugene d. 4/14/2001  
**Nelms**, Morris Sr. d. 4/26/2000  
**Newton**, Howard L. d. 11/13/2002  
**Rodriguez**, Lupe Ozuna d. 2/16/2001  
**Simerly**, Arnold d. 9/29/2002

### MINUTES OF THE 2002 ANNUAL MEETING

Champlin Reunion Group, Embassy Suites, Kansas City, MO, October 12, 2002 President Lou Gilbert called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Those in attendance were: Dick **Berman**, Glenn **Ecklund**, Jerry **Estes**, Lou **Gilbert**, Nat **Lerner**, Bob **Maitre**, Tom **Morton**, Charles **Meehan**, Carl **Olson**, Norman **Prewitt**, Jim **Robertson**, Lefty **Staller**, Larry **Suter**, George **Styles**, Joe **Tricarico**, Richard **Valentine**, and honorary member Hal **Medvedeff**. Invocation was given by Jerry Estes. Lou Gilbert read the names of our shipmates who have departed since the Virginia Beach Reunion. We gave the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Officers present: President, Lou Gilbert; Vice President, Tom Morton; Secretary-Treasurer, Norman Prewitt., Absent: Bill Gustin, Historian and Jack Brawdy, Asst. Historian. The minutes of the business meeting held in Colorado Springs 2001 were read. Addition to the minutes: "and installed". Motion to accept minutes as corrected passed. The Treasurer gave his report. The Treasurer's books were audited by Glenn Ecklund and George Styles prior to the meeting; books were found to be in order. Motion to accept passed. Discussion: Financial status of the Reunion Group was discussed. Motion: "Members attending the Reunion should contribute \$5.00 to help defray the expenses of the hospitality room" passed. Unfinished Business: Lou Gilbert read letters from Bill Gustin and Norman Prewitt regarding a donation to the Braille Institute in Honor of Bobbie Wheeler. Motion by Lefty Staller: "In the future the By-laws are to be strictly adhered to with no deviation without the vote of the Reunion Group." Motion passed. New Business: A unanimous vote to retain Bill Gustin as Seaweed Editor and Historian, with Jack Brawdy as Assistant Historian. Glowing comments were made as to the wonderful website that Bill Gustin maintains for the USS Champlin, and the job he does with the Seaweed. Motion to return items on loan from the U.S. Navy that are now in storage passed. Discussion regarding the mailing of the Seaweed. Lefty Staller made the motion: "Assess a \$5.00 annual fee to non-paying members wishing to receive the Seaweed". Motion passed. A notice to be inserted in the Seaweed for non-dues paying shipmates to complete and return with a check for \$5.00, payable to the Champlin Reunion Group and mailed to the Secretary Treasurer if they wish to continue to receive the Seaweed. Final topic for discussion: Reunion 2003. Final vote: Destination, Nashville, Tennessee, October 8-12, 2003.



Secretary to contact Sea Service Reunions Motion to adjourn, time 11:15, seconded and passed. Secretary. Norman S. Prewitt.

### REUNION 2003: NASHVILLE, TN

The 2003 Reunion has been set for Nashville, TN, if satisfactory arrangements can be made. The Sea Service Reunions organization has been contacted, but is unable to handle the arrangements within the traditional dates established for our reunions. Two ladies have stepped forward, Becky Medvedeff and Phyllis Prewitt, volunteering to handle the arrangements within our own organization. They need your help - right now. In order to make arrangements with hotels and tour attractions, they need to know approximately how many of the Champlin Reunion Group and their guests will be in attendance. They know that no one can guarantee their attendance, but they would like to know how many folks *think* they will be able to attend. Becky can be reached at 498 Cathy Ct., Odenton, MD 21113, (410) 674-2217. Phyllis can be reached at 2049 Eastridge Drive, Excelsior Springs, MO (816) 630-7272. **Do it now** - Becky will be visiting Nashville in a couple of weeks and could use the information in setting up potential lodging and tour attractions. Thanks for your help.

Thanks to all of the folks who helped with this edition including

Hugh Baker, Robert Baughan, Max Carpenter, Robert Champlin, James G. Craig, Gerald M. Cruthers, George A. Hanson, Jason Hathaway, Robert M. Jones and James McMennamin.

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