



Reunion 2010 Plans Set!

Plans for the 2010 USS Boyle/Champlin/Ordranax Reunion are now set. The reunion is scheduled for September 29, 2010 – October 3, 2010 in Warwick, Rhode Island. Audrey Woodard is once again coordinating reunion activities, and if past performance is any indication of future performance – **you won't want to miss this year's event!**

This year's event will feature trips and tours of the Charlestown Navy Shipyard, Newport Naval Base, and the Foxwoods Casino – transportation will be provided to all. A reunion information and registration package will be mailed in April – if you don't receive one (or misplace it) – contact Audrey Woodard at (603) 364-7315.

I'm told that the hotel is beautiful and provides a complimentary breakfast, a hospitality room with refreshments, a discounted lunch menu for conference attendees, as well as a free local shuttle service. Negotiated room rates are \$99.00 +tax per night – reservations must be made by August 30, 2010 to obtain the negotiated discounts.

Hotel Information:

Crowne Plaza Hotel
801 Greenwich Ave.
Warwick, RI
(800) 227-6963

As usual, Audrey has arranged dinners and evening entertainment each evening, and all are included in your reunion fee of \$250.00 (fee includes all trips/tours and transportation as well).

Room \$99.00 per night – Reunion Fee \$250.00 – reuniting with shipmates, fellow naval veterans, and family – **PRICELESS!** Hope to see you there!

War Has Curtailed But Not Halted The Ceremonies On Naval Ships Crossing The Line

Rites so ancient that their origin is lost on antiquity are still held when Naval vessels cross the Equator. Even war has failed to halt it, although it has in many instances discouraged elaborateness.

In these "crossing-the-line" ceremonies, pollywogs (men who have never sailed over the imaginary demarcations) are initiated and become shellbacks, later treasuring their Nephine certificates which testify that they have been "duly initiated into the solemn mysteries of the ancient order of the deep".

Typical of wartime observances is the "crossing-the-line" story of a convoy, bound for a South Pacific destination.

As the convoy neared the equator, the tedious routine of days and nights was broken aboard a transport swarming with sailors and marines.

The terms "shellbacks" and "pollywogs" were heard in the passageways. Sargents gathered names, checking off men who had been south of the line. Old timers gathered in groups to speculate as to the ability of "these landlubbers to take it".

"Meeting of all trusty shellbacks on Fo'c'sle at 1400; all landlubbers stay clear" the ship's bulletin read one day. That afternoon, amid a piping over the loudspeaker, His Honor, Admiral Davey Jones, Royal Scribe of the Domain of Neptunus Rex, came aboard with ruffles and flourishes. A strange procession filed around the AA gun platform forward.

Dave led the line. (A Chief Petty Officer of the United State Navy anywhere except in latitude 0000, he was garbed in nothing found in "Uniform Regulations, U. S. Navy") The Royal Chief of Police and a platoon of Royal Cops followed him to the bridge. Leathernecks or sailors who laughed at the

retinue, received swift and brutal justice. The Police Force of Neptunus Rex were unawed by rank and their canvas shillelaghs packed a wallop. Sitting down was no pleasure for many junior officers that night.

The Captain welcomed Davey aboard ship and announced that His Royal Highness, Neptune Rex, Ruler of the Raging Main, would hold court the next day. Landlubbers who approached the Royal Domain without permission were promised immediate justice.

After introductions to the senior officers, Davey Jones toured the decks as his Chief of Police issued subpoenas to all landlubbers, beachcombers, plow deserters, park bench warmers, parlor dunnigans, sea lawyers, lounge lizards, hay teasers, sand crabs, fourflushers, squaw men, and liberty hounds, falsely masquerading as seamen.

At 0900, 0000 latitude, Neptunus Rex boarded the transport amid cheers and band music. The Captain greeted the bearded ruler and the Royal Navigator took over the transport. This worthy was a nautical chap wearing appropriate epaulets and flourishing a spy glass. he arranged watches so that all pollywogs would receive trial. The Court then ascended the thrones on the welldeck.

The Lord High Chief Justice, an officer in black robes and wig, pass sentence on offenders who were allowed to plead their case and use the "Hones John" lie detector. Pollywogs never tell the truth, for the white bulb marked "The Whole Truth" never was lighted during the ceremonies.

The Marine troop commander was one of the first summoned. He was charged with:

"Willfully and maliciously having failed to show reverence and allegiance to the royal domain and Royal Person, and is herein and thereby a vile landlubber and pollywog.

"Willfully neglecting, during 23 years of service, to present himself before the royal court of His Majesty, Neptunus Rex.

"Willfully and knowingly leading such a nefarious gang of pollywogs and landlubbers into the Royal Domain without making, as the prime qualifications for becoming a members of his command, membership in the Ancient Order of the Deep."

The officer got the works.

The Chief Executioner grinned with unholy glee and the Royal Bears disported themselves happily in the ducking tank when another veteran Marine officer stopped before the Court. Curing 36 years of service he had never crossed the line.

He was charged with "hanging around Army recruiting stations with the purpose of resigning his Marine Corps commission and enlisting as an Army private." He pleaded not guilty, but the detector, with a loud ringing of bells and flashing red lights, screamed "It's a lie."

He also got the works.

After sentence was pronounced, the Royal Torturer and the Royal embalmer escorted the officer to the combination torture rack and embalming table. Next the Royal Doctor ministered medicine and unctions. The officer kissed the Royal Baby, bent his knees to Neptunus Rex and proceeded to the Royal Barber. Te Royal electrician with electrically charged forks speeded progress down the line.

Through the mixture of grease, glue and cement that passed for soapy lather, the barber couldn't find the officers So he remained unshorn.

The Bears cage or Royal Tank was the last stop, a hinged Barber's bench facilitated transfer of the patient to the tank. When he emerged from the underwater embrace of the Royal Bears, he was a full pledged shellback and he received a certificate and card proclaiming him a trusty shellback and a member of the Ancient Order of the Deep.

The others then had their turn. They had seen their top commanding officers get the works and took their sentence in good humor.

By noon the ships company were all shellback. Neptune and his court returned the ship to the Captain while the first lieutenant supervised the deck cleaning.

Traces of cement were present in their hair and ears at evening chow. Strange hair cuts were in evidence. Some Marines set a trifle gingerly. Bu no hard feelings were present. Too many, on becoming shellback, had joined the line of paddle wielders.

(Originally published 12/5/1943 - aboard the USS Boyle in the ships newsletter - "The Comet")

Memories of the USS Boyle

Earl Farabaugh wrote to share his US Navy and USS Boyle memories...

I joined the Navy in 1942 when I was 17 years old. Like so many others my age, my parents had to give their okay for me to enlist. After boot camp at Great Lakes Naval Station, I was put on a "troop train" to Norfolk. That's where I first joined the Boyle.

When I boarded the ship, I was your ordinary seaman. At that point I barely knew a ship from a canoe. I was assigned to the Forward Engine Room eventually becoming a Machinist Mate Second Class – a throttleman.

From Norfolk the Boyle steamed to New York. After arrival in New York City, the ship sent me to Newport, RI, for 20 mm Gunnery School, which I successfully completed. I was now ready if they needed me.



In the early part of 1943, we had just finished escorting a convoy from New York to Oran, North Africa, which consisted of many cargo ships outfitted with barrage balloons. The barrage balloons were used to deter German dive bomber attacks on the ships.

Upon arriving in Oran, we were moored to the breakwater. Half of the ship's crew was given liberty, and I was one of the lucky ones to go ashore along with my shipmate friend, Paliwoodie. After a few hours of looking at old men with donkeys, we decided to have a few bottles of "vino" and then return to the ship. Back aboard ship, the

latest movie was showing in the galley, a Tom Mix film as I recall. The ship's astute movie shower was Mr. Lippincott.

After a short period of time watching the movie, an air raid siren sounded followed by the General Quarters alarm. Paliwoodie and I immediately proceeded to our battle station on the bow to man a 20 mm gun. The weather was getting dark and overcast and we were searching the skies for the incoming enemy aircraft. Suddenly, I saw something that appeared to be an aircraft in the darkness. Paliwoodie had the gun loaded. I took aim and fired immediately at the "threat."

What happened next was a complete surprise. I made the hit. Only it was not the enemy aircraft I had seen, but instead, a barrage balloon tied to some other ship along the dock. It exploded and burst into flames. All became quiet. The sirens stopped and the two of us were in shock

- Earl Farabaugh; USS Boyle

Sounding Taps



USS Champlin

James Franklin Mitchell MM3c – 12/23/09

Taisto Edwin Ranta CGM - 12/18/09

USS Boyle

None Known

USS Ordronaux

None Known

"Rest easy, sleep well my brothers. Know the line has held, your job is done. Rest easy, sleep well. Others have taken up where you fell, the line has held. Peace, peace, and farewell..."

Meet the USS Ordronaux DD-617

USS Ordronaux (DD-617) was a Benson-class destroyer in the United States Navy during World War II.

She was named for John Ordronaux, the nineteenth-century privateersman.

Ordronaux was laid down 25 July 1942 by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Fore River, Massachusetts; launched 9 November 1942; sponsored by Mrs. J. Henry Judik; and commissioned 13 February 1943, Lieutenant Commander Robert Brodie, Jr. in command.

Service history

After shakedown, Ordronaux departed New York 1 May 1943 en route to Mers-El-Kebir, Algeria, escorting a convoy. Her first encounter with the enemy came on 6 July, while at anchor at Bizerte Naval Base. Attacked by German planes, she helped down several. Mediterranean theater

In the invasion of Sicily 9 July, Ordronaux was assigned a squadron of torpedo boats to patrol the harbor of Porto Empedocle and force out German E boats and Italian MAS boats, so they could be destroyed. She screened allied ships from Axis submarines and rendered fire support for the invasion until the 21st.

For nearly a year, following the invasion, Ordronaux sailed back and forth across the Atlantic and through the Mediterranean Sea on convoy duty.

North Atlantic Theater

On 7 April 1944, while operating with a hunter-killer task unit composed of DD's and DE's, Ordronaux spotted a German submarine U-856 south of Nova Scotia. USS Champlin made first contact by sounding and with USS Huse made several depth charge attacks forcing the submarine to surface. Both ships opened fire, and Champlin rammed the sub. Niels and Ordronaux captured 28 survivors.

Return to the Mediterranean

On 12 May, Ordronaux was back in the Mediterranean with MacKenzie screening Dido while the British cruiser bombarded Terracina and Gaeta on the west coast of Italy in support of the U. S. 5th Army, which was advancing on Rome. For the rest of the month, Ordronaux operated with Dido and Émile Bertin supporting the beachhead at Anzio.

Southern France

On 9 August, Ordronaux was attached to a fire support force for the invasion of southern France. On the 15th, she operated within 3000 yards of the beach providing "call fire" for Navy liaison officers and Army spotters. Many times she was straddled with 88 min projectiles from enemy shore batteries.

After the invasion of southern France, she returned to convoy duty. On 1 May 1945, after returning to New York for alterations, Ordronaux sailed for the Pacific, via the Panama Canal. On 24 July she arrived in Pearl Harbor and sailed immediately for Wake Island. There on 1 August, Ordronaux conducted close fire support, meeting accurate counter-fire.



Pacific Theater

Ordronaux arrived at Okinawa several days before Japan capitulated. After the surrender, she took part in two occupation landings—at Wakayama and at Nagoya. She made several cruises to ports in Honshū, including two to Tokyo Bay, before sailing for the United States 31 October.

Post War

Returning to the East Coast, she was assigned local operations off Charleston, South Carolina until she was placed out of commission in reserve January 1947, and attached to the Charleston group of the Atlantic Reserve Fleet. She was later berthed at Orange, Texas. She was struck from the Naval Vessel Register on 1 July 1971 and scrapped in 1973.

Awards

Ordronaux earned three battle stars for service in World War II.

This Month in Naval History

April 4, 1776 - Continental Navy frigate *Columbus* captures HM Tender *Hawke*, first American capture of British armed vessel

April 30, 1798 - Congress establishes Department of the Navy

April 12, 1861 - Civil War begins when Confederates fire on Fort Sumter, SC

April 14, 1898 - Commissioning of first Post Civil War hospital ship, USS *Solace*

April 6, 1909 - Commander Robert E. Peary reports reaching the North Pole

April 15, 1912 - USS *Chester* and USS *Salem* sailed from MA to assist RMS *Titanic* survivors

April 25, 1917 - Naval Armed Guard crew on board SS *Mongolia* engage and damage a German U-boat. This was the first engagement of U.S. naval personnel against the enemy in World War I.

April 10, 1941 - USS *Niblack*, while rescuing survivors of torpedoed ship, depth charged German submarine; first action of WW II between U.S. and German navies

April 18, 1942 - USS *Hornet* launches Doolittle's Army bombers for first attack on Japan

April 7, 1944 – USS Champlin rams and sinks German U-Boat U856. Champlin's commanding officer John J. Shaffer III is mortally wounded in the action. USS *Ordranax* assists USS *Nields* in capture of 29 German Survivors.

April 1, 1945 - Over 1200 Navy ships and Army troops begin invasion of Okinawa

Quotable Quotes:

"We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm." - *George Orwell*.

Have a favorite quote? Send it to us for publication

USS Champlin Merchandise

Norm Prewitt has a small quantity of the following USS Champlin items available for sale. He can also arrange for ordering more where needed. To purchase any of the following, or for more information on the items – contact Norm Prewitt by phone at: 816-630-7272

Embroidered Hats - \$10.00 plus shipping
Colors: Navy, Light Blue, White

Polo Shirts - \$25.00 plus Shipping
Colors: Navy, Light Blue, White
Sizes: S-M-L-XL

Sweatshirts: \$20.00 plus shipping (XXL \$25.00)
Colors: Navy, White
Sizes: S-M-L-XL-XXL

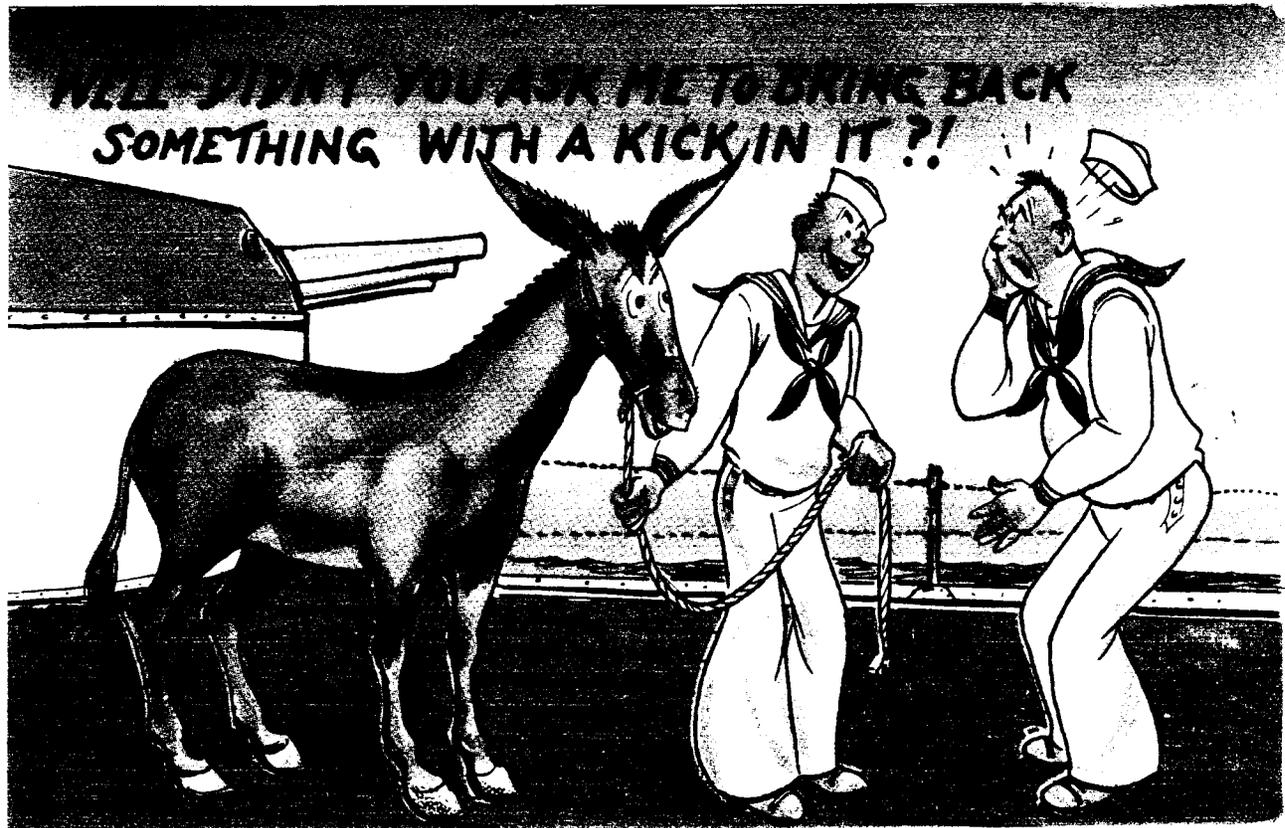
HELP WANTED

This is your newsletter, and I need your help to make it meaningful to all of you. The best stories (and series of stories) have always been written by the officers and crew aboard ship. So please take a bit of time and write down your memories and stories (you've told them to others – so share them with us), and mail them or email them to me at:

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I'm particularly interested in hearing from the USS Boyle and USS *Ordranax* group!



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