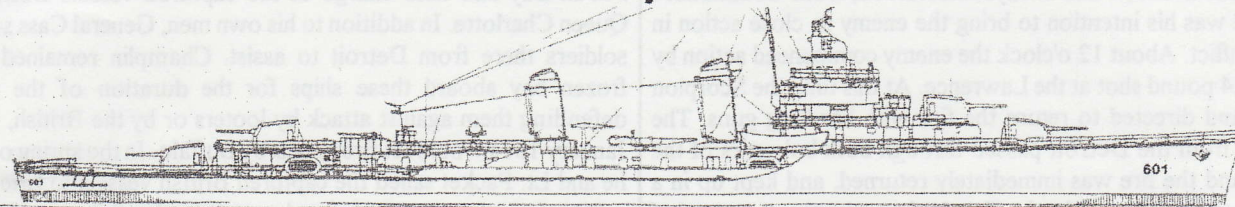


# USS Champlin DD-601



Page 1

## THE SEAWEED

Summer 2002

skivywaver@myrealbox.com

3480 State Route 5 & 20, Canandaigua, NY 14424-9778

www.usschamplin.com

### USS CHAMPLIN - THE NAME AND THE MAN

In the last issue of the Seaweed, we presented the first of a series of articles describing the life and times of Stephen Champlin, the man after whom the USS Champlin was named. We ended that series with the paragraph: "In 1840, the Rhode Island Historical Society asked Captain Champlin to write for them 'a candid and impartial statement of the facts within.....his recollection, respecting the service rendered by Commodore O.H. Perry in creating and equipping the fleet, and the part he sustained as Commander of it in the Battle of Lake Erie'".

Stephen Champlin's narrative continues from there:

"I am able to furnish the following particulars of that memorable event, from a journal kept by me at that time.

"Pursuant to orders, I arrived at Erie, Pennsylvania, the station of the United States fleet on Lake Erie, July 24, 1813, with a draft of 70

the Ariel, Lieutenant Packet, and the Scorpion, commanded by myself, to get under weigh and stand out toward the enemy, and annoy them at long shot. We dashed directly at them. Upon seeing the boldness with which they were approached, they changed their course and stood toward Long Point. Late in the afternoon we were recalled. Every officer and man in the squadron was engaged all night in getting the fleet ready for action. At 3 a.m. the signal was made to get under weigh, and at daylight the whole squadron was in motion. Although, for three days, neither officers nor men had had any sleep, except such as could be snatched upon deck, the greatest anxiety was manifested to pursue the enemy. After a cruise of 24 hours off Long Point, without getting sight of the enemy, the fleet returned to Erie for the purpose of taking in supplies for the Army under General Harrison.

"We were now reinforced by the arrival of Captain Elliot with several officers and about ninety men most of whom he took on board the Niagara, which ship was manned with more experienced



previous to the action, I had always understood, from Commodore Perry, that it was his intention to bring the enemy to close action in case of a conflict. About 12 o'clock the enemy commenced action by throwing a 24 pound shot at the Lawrence. At this time the Scorpion was hailed and directed to return the fire with her long guns. The second shot from the Detroit passed through both bulwarks of the Lawrence, and the fire was immediately returned, and kept up in a most gallant style, followed by the Caledonia, under the command of Lieutenant Turner, and supported by the Ariel, Lieutenant Packet, and the Scorpion, ahead upon her weatherbow. The Queen Charlotte made sail and closed up with the Detroit, shortly after the action commenced, and directed her fire at the Lawrence. It seemed to be the enemy's plan to destroy the commodore's ship, and then cut up the fleet in detail. For this purpose, their heaviest fire was directed at the Lawrence. Commodore Perry made every effort to close with the enemy, but the tremendous fire to which he was exposed cut away every brace and bowline, and soon rendered the Lawrence unmanageable. She still, however, held out, for more than two hours, within canister-shot distance, the Niagara remaining a long way astern, firing at long shot from her 12 pounder. A short time before Commodore Perry's going aboard of her, she ranged ahead of the Lawrence, and to windward of her, thus bringing the commodore's ship between her and the enemy, when she might have passed to leeward, and relieved the Lawrence from the destructive fire of the enemy; the wind being at that time southeast, when, the American squadron steering large, with the exception of the Lawrence, she being entirely disabled, and lying like a log upon the water, the Caledonia took, and maintained her station on a line which was just astern of the commodore during the whole of the action.

"Soon after Commodore Perry got on board of the Niagara, Capt. Elliot left her to bring up the small vessels that were kept astern by the lightness of the wind. Commodore Perry now made signal for close action. The smaller vessels put out their sweeps and made every exertion to comply with the order. At this time the Niagara bore up with a view to break the enemy's line, which threw them into confusion. In passing the enemy, she poured in her starboard and larboard broadsides within half pistol shot, supported by the smaller vessels, which were at that time enabled, with the aid of their sweeps, to get up. The enemy soon struck, with the exception of the Little Belt and Chippewa, which were brought to by the Scorpion and Trippe - the Little Belt by the former - and so near were they to making their escape that it was 12 p.m. before I came to an anchor under the stern of the Niagara with the Little Belt in tow."

"The 'Scorpion' later was involved in transporting General (later, U.S. President) Harrison's Army from Portage River to the Middle Sister, from which they were taken by the fleet (including the Scorpion) to Malden and accompanying them up the Thames River. During the winter of 1813-1814, Stephen was put in charge of the captured ships "Queen Charlotte" and "Detroit" at Put-In-Bay, Pennsylvania.

"His next cruise was on Lake St. Clair and the river Thames. He took the Scorpion 40 miles up river to within 3 miles of where Colonel Johnson had defeated and slain Chief Tecumseh, and secured a vessel loaded with baggage of the British army and took it and the severely wounded Johnson to Detroit.

"After this, he was given many minor jobs to perform until December 15th, at which time he was ordered by Elliot to return to

Put-In-Bay and take charge of the captured vessels Detroit and Queen Charlotte. In addition to his own men, General Cass sent 200 soldiers there from Detroit to assist. Champlin remained in the frozen bay aboard these ships for the duration of the winter, defending them against attack by looters or by the British, who in January 1814 would set fire to nearby Buffalo. In the spring of 1814, he and Lt. Packet sailed the captured British vessels to Erie.

"On January 14, 1814 Stephen wrote the following letter to Captain Jesse D. Elliot, Commanding U.S. Naval force on Lake Erie:

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 1st of April. The beef is very bad. I have the honor to be Your Ob'dt Humble Servant Stephen Champlin"

Here we leave the story - to be completed in the next issue of the Seaweed.

## BOB JONES REMEMBERS THE TYPHOON

Bob Jones RM2c (ATCS) writes, "Prior to reporting aboard Champlin around July or August 1943, I had possibly seen the ocean, maybe one time. Needless to say the word 'sea-legs' was not in my vocabulary. However, after a while, I could put on my pants while the ship was rolling and pitching without holding on.

"Around mid-September 1945, Champlin was anchored in Buckner Bay, Okinawa. Champlin was rolling and pitching as if at sea. Going top-side, I found that we were still swinging on the hook, as us old salts used to say. Several ships close by were dragging anchor, especially the LSTs.

"For safety, the skipper decided to get underway or maybe was ordered to get underway by SOPA (Senior Officer Present Afloat). The sea-state was unbelievable. The port side was taking the full force of the storm. The inclinometer on the bridge, some say, was reading 50° to 55°. Several times, during an extreme roll to starboard, I would have bet and given odds that the ship would never return to the upright position again.

"At the time, it seemed much longer, but the storm raged for at least a day and a half. Some damage to the port side, involved the bulwark, about mid-ships, being washed away. The deck crew was attempting to tie a safety line across the area where the bulwark had been.

"The leading seaman, I don't remember his name, VICHONI or VICHONE, not sure. He obviously was a very strong and agile man, was washed overboard - gone, then the very next wave washed him back aboard. Anyone remembering that incident, maybe could add some facts, maybe his name, or more about his prowess.

"During that time, we ate very little if anything at all. The cooks did a great job with the soup and sandwiches. Impossible to sit down to eat, both hands were for holding on. A lot of holding on was going on, as I remember. Should you be topside when an extreme



roll occurred, if you were lucky, you could reach overhead and hold on to a stanchion, etc. If you were to let go, you would fall into the ocean.

"After WWII, I decided that I had enough of ships, so I transferred to the aviation navy, into seaplanes, of all things. Maybe a few stories about seaplanes and Coco Solo, Canal Zone, next time."

Bob Jones adds the following, as he says, "Lifted from Reader's Digest about 1945".

"A World War II destroyer put into the Port of New York Navy Yard for repairs, after successfully sinking its ninth German U-boat. The Navy announced the enemy action and the news media was on-hand to interview the crew. When asked to describe the incident, an 'Old Salt' said, "On getting a sound contact with the submarine, green dye was spread on the surface of the water. Then the destroyer, laid-by quietly for a period of time. The sub, curious to learn the status of the situation, surfaced to check on the destroyer's location. As the sub's periscope broke the surface, the dye covered the lens of the periscope. Therefore it appeared that the sub had not cleared the surface, and continued to surface. When the sub was about 50 feet in the air, we shot them down with our anti-aircraft guns".

## CHAMPLIN E-MAIL

The following messages were placed on the USS Champlin's web site, [www.usschamplin.com](http://www.usschamplin.com) Thought you would find them of interest:

Friday 04/26/2002 8:25:12am, from Edward G. Kenlon, III, E-Mail: [ed@kenlon.com](mailto:ed@kenlon.com), Homepage Title: [www.KENLON.com](http://www.KENLON.com) Location: Fredericksburg, VA "Greetings to my fellow veterans. I'm looking to know if anybody out there can tell me more about Chief PhM Robert R. Kenlon who served on the USS Champlin DD-601. I'm a 30 year Navy veteran myself and I'm researching the family name. Any contact would be appreciated. Very respectfully, Ed Kenlon Fredericksburg, VA [mailto:ed@kenlon.com](mailto:mailto:ed@kenlon.com)"

Wednesday 07/17/2002 7:07:45pm, from Darren Bell, E-Mail: [darren@bell7786.freemove.co.uk](mailto:darren@bell7786.freemove.co.uk) United Kingdom. "Just came across this site by accident whilst doing some research on U-130 which sank the British ship SS Empire Tower on the 5th March 1943. My uncle Stanley Malaburn Gordon went down with the ship, which sunk in 60 seconds. It's a shame you boys didn't sink U-130 a little earlier! Thank you for a great site, Respect and best wishes to you all. Darren Bell UK."

Tuesday 07/09/2002 7:26:48pm, Christopher Formaggia, E-Mail: [christopher.formaggia@virgin.net](mailto:christopher.formaggia@virgin.net), Monmouthshire, Wales, UK, "Your website is a fantastic record of this ship and its history. My interest in her stems from the fact that I am researching the war dead of my parish in Monmouthshire in Wales [UK]. First Radio Officer Walter William Henry Bywater was killed on the S.S Empire Tower on 5th March 1943 which was torpedoed and sunk by U-130. As you are aware Champlin sunk U-130 just a week later. I salute this living record of your ship."

Sunday 07/21/2002 10:43:59am, Keith Fagan, E-Mail: [Keitherc@msn.com](mailto:Keitherc@msn.com), "Proud to say I am a son of Thomas Francis Fagan, who served on the Champlin. Love the photos of him and his shipmates. I would love to see more. I am sure that many shipmates or their relatives may have other pictures. Just a suggestion, maybe at the next reunion you could talk about acquiring more photos. By the

way, does anyone know who took all the photos that are on the site? Maybe a subject for a future article in the Seaweed? Thanks, Keith Fagan."

## MORE ON THE U-130

Darren Bell and Christopher Formaggia both mentioned the U-130 in their e-mail messages. Here's some more information on the U-130, translated by a Champlin shipmate (that "usually reliable source" you hear so much about) from information found on the German website, [www.u-boat-archiv.de](http://www.u-boat-archiv.de)

"U-130 was a type IX-C submarine, with a displacement of 1,144 tons and a complement of 49 men and 4 officers. Type IX-C was 260" long, with a beam of 22 ft. The batteries alone weighed nearly 75 tons. Surface speed was 19.25 knots, with a submerged speed of 7.46 knots. Range was 13,450 nautical miles at a speed of 10 knots (vs 5,430 miles at 15 knots for the Champlin)

"U-130 was ordered built on 7 August 1939. Her keel was laid on 20 August 1941 at the shipyards of Deschimag AG Weser in Bremen. Launching was on 14 March 1941 and she was commissioned on 11 June 1941 by Lieutenant Commander Ernst Kals who served as captain until 6 February 1943. The captain from 7 February 1943 until she was sunk three weeks later was Lieutenant Siegfried Keller.

"During her 2 1/2 year life-span, the U-130 made 6 operational cruises, sinking five ships for a total of 167,350 tons. She also damaged one 6,986-ton ship.

"On her first sortie she operated only in the North Atlantic. On her second, she operated in the western Atlantic, U.S. coast, Nova Scotia, Long Island and the Chesapeake Bay. On the third, she operated again in the west Atlantic, the Caribbean, Trinidad, Curacao and Venezuela. During this cruise she carried out a successful main battery (4.25") artillery shelling of the oil refinery in Curacao.

"On Lt. Cdr. Ernst Kals's final cruise, the boat left its home base in Lorient, France on 29 October 1942, operated in the middle Atlantic, off the coast of Morocco and the North African coast and returned to base on 30 December 1942.

"Lt. Siegfried Keller made his first and last cruise as commanding officer, sailing from Lorient on 28 February 1943. The U-130 was sunk on 12 March 1943 by a depth charge attack of the USS Champlin (DD601). The location was west of the Azores at 37 degrees, 10' North; 40 degrees, 21' West. Fifty-three lives were lost and there were no survivors."

## ARCHA KNOWLTON'S RECOLLECTIONS

And this from the pen of Archa Knowlton: "Your latest edition of the Seaweed is great and it seems to get better every time. Thanks so much, I know it takes a huge effort on your part and your co-editors.

"I'm fascinated with your 'USS Champlin -The Name And the Man' and I can't wait to read the following chapters. I wish I had known all about him when we were serving on board his namesake.

"I vaguely remember his descendants who attended the commissioning but they seemed like very nice people. I'm also especially interested in that I spent many years of my life in the



greater New London, CT area from which port he went to sea. I don't live all that far away from there right now (Darien, CT)

"It's great fun to read the contributions of our former shipmates. As I've told you before my years on the Champlin were a wonderful experience. I enjoyed working with every single guy and in my special room where I spend most my time these days, I look with pleasure on my copy of Irwin Kappes' great painting of DD601 at Sicily - right alongside another painting of my landing my F4U on the USS Guadalcanal (The other segment of my war life).

"I hesitate sending this particular memory because it can't compare with the good ones you report, but I do tell this fun story many times since the war, it goes like this:

"On one of our particularly long (12.5 knots) convoys to Africa, I was in charge of the officers mess (officers had their own food and the Officer-In-Charge was rotated every few months). On this particular trip it was just my luck to run out of food. I managed to scrounge a few things from the ship's stores but the last few days of the crossing we were eating very frugally. Naturally, I was not a very popular guy among my fellow officers so I couldn't wait to get to Algiers to buy some food ashore.

"We had a steward (named Garcia, I think) so as soon as we anchored, I sent him ashore with plenty of money to restock our supplies (for some strange reason, the officers mess was separate from the crews food - but that was the custom at the time).

"We all waited patiently for Garcia to return - I had told him to specially get some steaks and good things like that. All of sudden I was going to be accepted by my fellow officers - but Garcia didn't return to the ship. About twenty-four hours later, with my stock going down and down, I had the duty on the bridge (we were at anchor in the harbor) when suddenly I saw a small craft approaching the ship on the starboard side. As it got closer, I spotted a figure on the bow of this little boat and sure enough, there was Garcia. I went down to get him aboard and immediately asked if he got all the food we were looking forward to. His answer was, "No, but look at this", at which point he reached down and held up a huge fish (50+ pounds).

"Apparently, he had been 'rolled' on the beach and all he could show for his efforts was this monstrous creature which already was beginning to deteriorate in the sun.

"I don't know what punishment Garcia got for being AOL, but I do know that I could have killed him and I was immediately relieved of my responsibilities as mess officer. Others may have forgotten this incident, but I personally will never forgive or forget Garcia."

### **FRANCIS CLYDE RYDEEN, CDR (CAPT)**

As George Styles and any other Ship's Historian knows, the real Historian's job and the Historian's job description don't necessarily mesh. However, the job is usually very challenging and you meet, directly or indirectly, many interesting people. The following, taken from several e-mail messages is a good example. In the way of background, the USS Champlin's web site gets quite a bit of activity, particularly from genealogist interested in a particular family name. This e-mail exchange involved the name of Francis Clyde Rydeen (the Champlin's captain 12 May 1945 to 21 March 1946, 313 days) and the inquiry came from a professional genealogist in Sweden by the name of Therese Erickson. She had been authorized to research

certain lines of the Rydeen family, and finding the name of Francis Clyde Rydeen on the Champlin web site, she followed the instruction on the web site and contacted me. My reply gave her the usual data we maintain on all shipmates including name, rank, ID #, date and place of enlistment/appointment, date and place of discharge/resignation, dates served aboard Champlin, etc.

She replied in the following manner: "Hello, Thank you very much for your answer!!! Yes, it was of great help. You solved several problems for us. We are now more sure of the fact that this is the person we are looking for. His brother John was born in Rhode Island in 1911, and he lived later in Norfolk, VA. I saw on the map that Newport is a Naval Base and that would make sense, because his father Hjalmar Rydeen also worked for the Navy. Everything matches very well. We also wondered about Francis' occupation/job, and that you answered. If you want to include an article in the newsletter, that would be lovely. Greetings from Sweden! Therese PS. Did you know that Gustin is also a Swedish surname!?"

Later, Erickson sent the following e-mail: "Hello again, I have to tell you that the Rydeen family in Virginia and their relatives in Sweden now have found each other!!! About two years ago the relatives here in Sweden sent a letter to a Rydeen in Virginia, but never got a reply. The letter ended up at an elderly woman who didn't have any interest in family. Last week, her daughter in New Mexico had come home to help her mother move into a retirement center, and she had seen the letter. She became very interested and she called the relatives in Sweden right away! Everything turned out very well, I have to say. We now know that it actually was Francis Clyde Rydeen we were looking for, he was called Frank by the family. The person who made the phone call, Karen, is the daughter of Frank's brother, John. Karen seemed to know her family history pretty well, so I don't need to do any more research from here. You do not need to place an article in the newsletter either, since the family has been found. Thank you for the information you gave us about Francis/Frank, it was most helpful. Sincerely, Therese."

### **GODDARD BECK MM3/C**

We received a nice card from Goddie Beck with a picture of three rowboats and Goddie's message, "These are little bit smaller than DD-601, which I loved.", and adds that, "Just getting over the Seaweed news, certainly was great to hear from you. I was in touch with Paul Days wife, who my wife, Dottie and I and Jan, Paul's wife, always went to the reunions, if they were close to PA. Sorry my spelling and writing isn't great, but at 84 I'm glad I'm breathing. Paul (Bud we called him) passed away - sad, but that is life.

"My wife recalled about Sales, he sure was a card. He was to cook on a training ship (of course they had a cook - so he said he was 'going along for the ride', what a guy. I'm going to try to get hold of two other guys from our area that were on our good old DD-601. We had great officers on that ship, like Mr. Anastasion, and 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. Ha. Sorry for being so windy, but they were, to me, the 'good old days'. I wouldn't trade them for a million bucks - I got more tales to tell."

### **CHAMPLIN 2002 REUNION UPDATE NEXT PAGE**



## REUNION GROUP NEWS

### CHAMPLIN REFERENCES

#### Books:

*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

*Operation Dragoon*, William B. Breuer, Jove Books, Pg. 214.

*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://uboa.net/boats/u130.htm>

<http://uboa.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

### GONE. . . TOO SOON

**Allen**, Robert d. 11/23/2001

**Glass**, Norman Robert d. 09/06/2001

**Higgins**, Donald George d. 10/6/2001

**Powell**, Burgess Eugene d. 4/14/2001

**Rodriguez**, Lupe Ozuna d. 2/16/2001

### CHANGING BERTHS

**Lipfert**, Mrs. Ralph, 3116 Gracefield Road, Apt. # 222, Silver Springs, MD 20904 (301) 586-0818

### REUNION 2002 KANSAS CITY MO

The USS Champlin's 2002 Reunion at Kansas City, MO is approaching at breakneck speed. Reservations have been received from Anastasion, Berman, Wanda Connors, Estes, Gilbert, Barbara Glass, Gustin, Doris Higgins, Lerner, Matre, Medvedeff, Meehan, Morton, Olson, Styles, Suter, Tricarico, Valentine and Wahle. Hurry up and get **your** reservations in right away.

Kansas City is a world-class city. Metropolitan, yet livable, it sits proudly in the Heartland of America. Truly a city offering something for everyone, Kansas City provides sophistication in a hometown atmosphere. The city was carefully planned with regard for beauty, charming its visitors with fountains and boulevards. The entertainment opportunities are unlimited. From dining to shopping; museums to amusement parks and casinos; arts to sports - Kansas City has them all. We truly hope that you are considering coming to Kansas City for the Champlin Reunion, October 9th to the 13th, 2002.

The schedule to date:

Wednesday 9th - Arrival and fellowship

Thursday 10th - Tour Independence, Library, B.W. Estate, Entertainment, Lunch - \$40.00

Friday 11th - Tour K.C., Steamboat Arabia Museum, Hallmark, Lunch \$40.00

Saturday 12th - Banquet: Steak \$35.00 Chicken \$30.00 Raffles and Door Prizes

Time is running short, we request your immediate response. We are having a time trying to complete our plans since the registrations have not been coming in very quickly. Not knowing how many guests we will be having and without the registrations we are financially finding it difficult to complete our plans. Please plan to come. We'd love having you here. Special airfares are available from Southwest Airlines. First, ask for their Senior rate, then refer them to the Champlin Reunion rate using Code ID #J7420. Make your hotel reservations at the Embassy Suites, 7640 N.W. Tiffany Springs Parkway, Kansas City, MO 64153. Telephone direct to 816-891-7788 or 1-800-EMBASSY. Ask for the Champlin Reunion rates, \$89 King or Standard and includes Breakfast and a two hour social from 5-7pm (read Hospitality Room. . . YES!!). Rates are good for two days before and two days after the reunion. Free shuttle from airport.

Checks to: CHAMPLIN REUNION GROUP

%Norman Prewitt - 2049 Eastridge Drive - Excelsior Springs, Mo. 64024 Phone 816-630-7272 E-mail: LILBITBPB@aol.com

PRINT name as wanted on name tag \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Guest \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

We look forward to seeing you in Kansas City



**JOHN RUSSELL GM3C**

Early this year, in the first week of January, Bev and I were preparing to return home from the Tampa Bay area of Florida. We contacted John Russell to see if it would be convenient if we dropped by at their home in Dunnellon, Florida to spend an hour or so with a former shipmate and his family. Good idea, but bad timing. We arrived at their lovely home to find that the previous evening, John had suffered a massive heart attack and was in the intensive care unit of the local hospital. We did meet his wife, Virginia, and two sons, Patrick and Daniel, and spent some time with them talking about John, the USS Champlin, and his current health problem. Virginia has kept in contact with us, providing updates on John's condition. John spent a lot of time in the hospital, then came home for rehabilitation, but his troubles are still with him. Apparently, during his treatment in the hospital his epiglottis became paralyzed, frozen in an open position, so he is still being fed via tube until the various doctors can determine a corrective course of action. This is now eight months after the initial attack and John could use some correspondence from his former shipmates. Virginia tells me he retains his sense of humor and enjoys a good story or two - including those about his life on the USS Champlin. John was a GM3c coming aboard the Champlin on 4 August 1943 and leaving Champlin for discharge on 1 February 1946 - a total of 912 days, certainly one of the

longer serving shipmates. John can be reached at 9727 SW 188<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Dunnellon, FL 34432-7708, by phone at (352) 489-6005 and by e-mail at [rendelrussell@earthlink.net](mailto:rendelrussell@earthlink.net).

**THANKS AND NEXT**

Many, many thanks to **Goddard Beck**, **Darren Bell**, **Therese Erickson**, **Keith Fagan**, **Christopher Formaggia**, **Bob Jones**, **Edward Kenlon**, **Archa Knowlton** and the "usually reliable source". A special thanks to **Phyllis** and **Norm Prewitt** for all their efforts in arranging for the 2002 Champlin Reunion.

The next issue will conclude the Stephen Champlin story, and with your help, will include **your** memories and recollections of life aboard the USS Champlin. The Seaweed is the log of your adventures - and those of your shipmates - during WWII. If we don't describe those events, someone else may do so who was not even there.

Sooo, send me your recollections, photographs and memorabilia to be part of the USS Champlin's historical collection..

See you at the USS Champlin's 2002 Reunion in KC, MO!