

Kee



Bird

Volume 3, Issue 3

USS Edisto Association Newsletter

Winter 2009

From the Helm

President's Corner

Jerry Downs



Greetings Shipmates:

Hope this finds all of you hale and hardy.

In June of 2009 after our great reunion in Baton Rouge, my wife Judy and I went to a ConFam in DuPage County, IL, to check it out as a possible future reunion site. They have some good hotels and most are offering good deals. There are many tour possibilities. The Great Lakes Naval Training Center and The First Division Museum honors Big Red One Soldiers. Those are just a couple of the tour sites. DuPage is 20 mi. west of Chicago.

Another possibility is Lake County, IL which is north of Chicago. Maybe we could do the Chicago area for one of our future reunions.

Remember you can opt for a Life-Time dues if you want for only \$100. Also remember our USS EDISTO history book, \$35 each for advanced orders to James Jensen.

The Holiday season will be here before we know it. We wish everyone the best holiday ever.

Sincerely,

Jerry

USS Edisto Association Standing

- Living Shipmates: 1071
- Deceased Shipmates: 1115
- Missing Shipmates: 1175
- Total Shipmates: 3061

- Total Membership: 340
- Active Members: 329
- Deceased Members: 11
- Life Members 27
- New Members in 2009 54

Look for your new Membership Cards enclosed in this mailing



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About the Kee Bird

The Kee Bird is the official newsletter of the USS Edisto Association, Inc and is published three times yearly for members of the Association. Stories, photos and other materials relative to icebreakers should be mailed to the USS Edisto Association, P.O. Box 747, Mims, FL 32754 and shall become the property of the USS Edisto Association. We make no guarantee that said stories or photos will be published and we reserve the right to edit the content to conserve space to limit printed materials to keep cost down.

Editor/ Publisher/Printer

Glenn Smith

—

2009-2010

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www.ussedistoagb2.com

Historian

Jon Newton

Ship Logo

Eugene Mollica



Davy Jones Locker

We extend our condolences to the friends and families of our shipmates who *Crossed the Bar* in 2008-2009.

Last_Name	First_Name	Rate	Onboard	Died On
Amorin	Joseph S.	SA	51-52	07/04/2008
Bouffard	Roger J.	Unk	Unk	08/02/2008
Cheney	Theodore A.	YN3	47	02/28/2008
Domoretsky	Vasily (Ziggy)	BM2	61	05/28/2008
Drummond	Glen N.	AGC	58	01/15/2009
Jacobs	Richard P.	SN	51-52	06/28/2008
Jines	Leslie W.	YN3	54	02/02/2009
Korka	William J.	RM3	49-50	09/01/2008
Lakatos	Steven W.	SN	55-56	11/16/2009
Leach	Donald B.	LT	56-59	03/05/2008
Lynch	James T.	SKSN	51	03/13/2008
McIntyre	Raymond H.	SK3	54-56	03/28/2009
Mitchell	Louis C.	SA	51-55	06/02/2008
Neff	Ray	QM3	58-59	12/23/2008
Newell	Augusta	TN	58	02/15/2008
Newsome	Theren T.	HM3	49	06/29/2008
Nocon	Cenestor A.	SD2	61	08/12/2008
Petruno	William E.	ETRSN	57	07/18/2008
Soeth	John C.	AT3	52	03/20/2008
Vadelund	Gerhard L.	ET2	47-48	06/03/2008
Watterson	Richard L.	EMC	47-48	01/08/2008
Winchester	Ralph L.	SA	55-56	09/09/2009



Note from our Treasurer

Glenn,

As of today I have 224 paid members for 2009. This includes the 24 Life Members. I have 28 paid members for 2010, 8 for 2011, 7 for 2012, 5 for 2013, 1 for 2014, plus the 24 Life Members. We had 58 new members so far in 2009. I have 18 orders for the book "History of the Edisto".

The following members have donated \$100.00 or more from the start of the Edisto Association - Robert Geddes, Leo Johnson, Edward Davidson, Warren Heidel, Jon Mason, Austin Schroder, Omar Toner, John Repic, Karl Kettelhut, Ron Mallet, Eugene Fettingter, Robert Radasch, George Granakis, Virgil Paulk and Lyman smith. Lyman has donated thru license plate sales \$2362.00 over the years.

Jim

REUNION 2010
October 17-20th
Warwick, Rhode Island

What: USS Edisto Reunion 2010
801 Greenwich Ave
Warwick, RI 02886
Ph (401) 732-6000

Where Providence/Warwick, RI Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Crossings
When: October 17-20, 2010

Rate: \$99 per night, double occupancy (includes ALL state and local taxes)

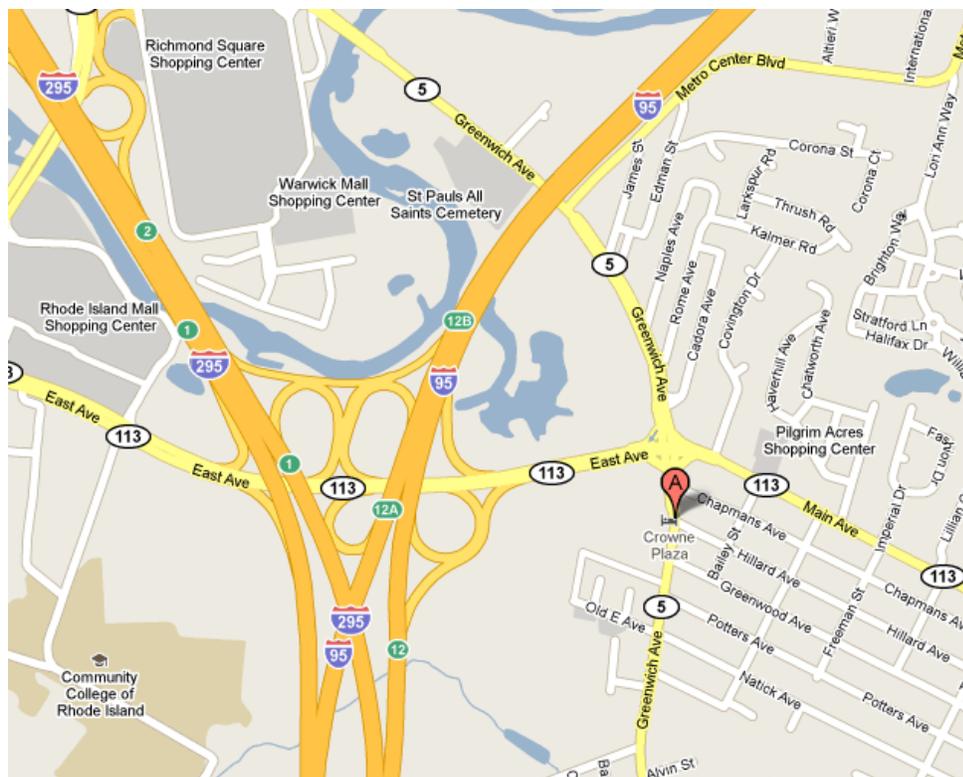
Cutoff Date: September 16, 2010

Cancellation: 24 hours or more before expected arrival to avoid penalty

Reservations: Reservations may be made by calling the Hotel Reservations Department at (401) 732-6000 or through the Crowne Plaza toll free reservation line at (800) 227-6963. To receive the preferred rates, guests must identify their affiliation with **USS Edisto Association** when making their reservations. Rates cannot be adjusted at check-in or check-out for guests who fail to identify their affiliation when making reservations. Special room requests may be indicated, but cannot be guaranteed (i.e. non-smoking, king bed, etc.) **MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!**

Online Reservations - You may log onto www.crowneplaza.com/warwickri to make a reservation and use the code "**USE**" (without the quotation marks) to get the preferred Edisto rate.

Hotel Info: Easy Access off I-95. Get off at Exit 12A and go East. Free shuttle to/from Airport 2 miles



MAIL CALL

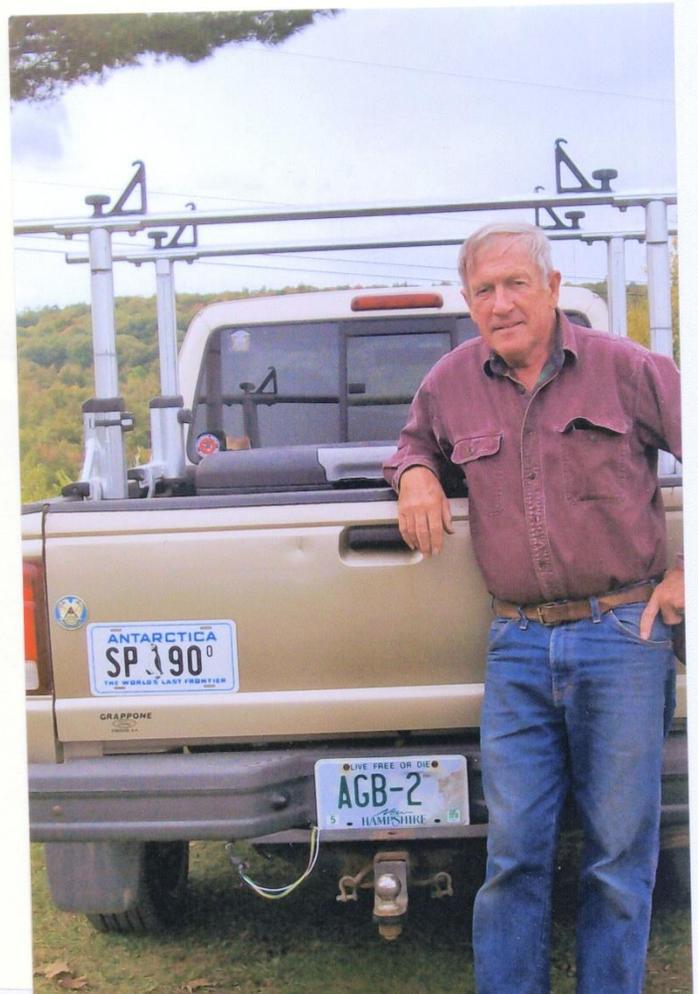
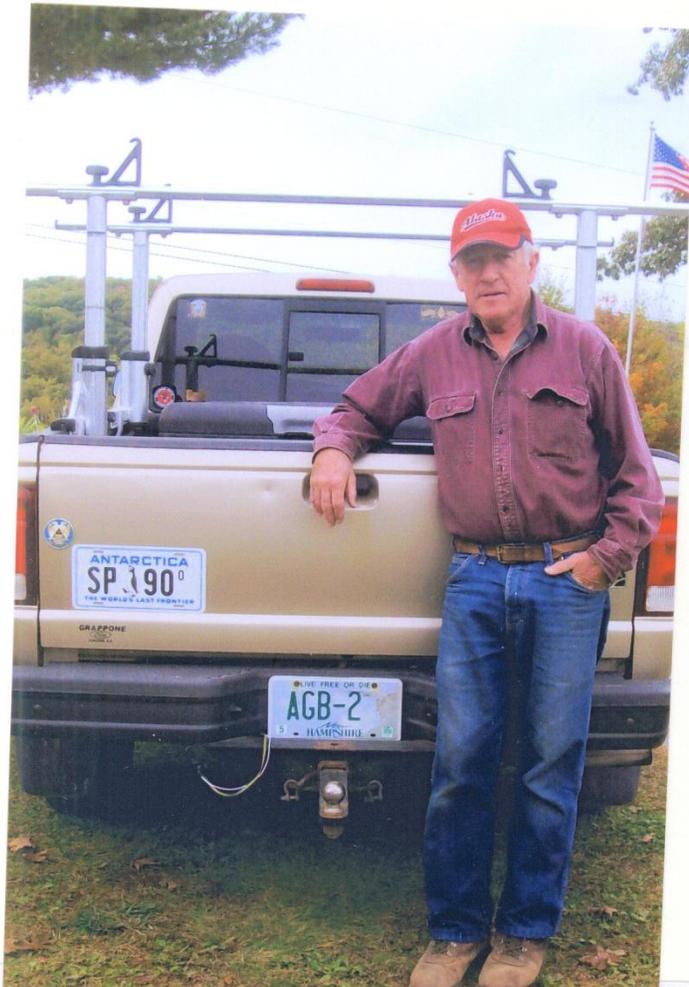
LYMAN H. SMITH, II
41 JOLLY FARM ROAD
P. O. BOX 524
SOUTH SUTTON, NH 03273

10/5/09

Glenn,

My wife somehow got a couple of
shots of this old geezer and his favorite
pick-up truck. Both truck and driver
have a lot of miles on them!

Lyman





MAIL CALL



From: Jo-Anne Burke [mailto:sumerbaby1@gmail.com]

Sent: Sunday, August 16, 2009 11:08 AM

To: Glenn D Smith

Subject: Re: USS Edisto

Hi Glenn:

I will pass your letter on to my dad, Steve after I answer it myself. The memory video was a hit. There was not a dry eye in the house that night as we all watched it with all of the many pictures and background music to go with each pictures. The 1st set of pics were of Steve growing up, various pictures of the town, graduating etc...That song was ""This is my home town" by Meloncamp. Next was Moms pics of her growing up. Her song was "Green Eyed Lady". All of his service pics and all of the USS Edisto pics were shown to the Navy Song "Anchors Away". Then when they were dating and got married the song was "Going to the Chapel." Pictures of my self and my brothers and sister was Paul Anka's song "Having my Baby" Then the pictures progressed on to Steve being a fire fighter and a member of the VFW and American Legion and Moms involvement in the organizations in the woman's capacity. Us all growing up with all of our activities. Weddings and Steve and Dolores's grandchildren. And that song was Lee Greenwood's "Proud to be an American" and slipping into Toby Keith's "Comes to you Courtesy of the Red White and Blue". The song that played through the ending with the credits was The Statler Brothers "Do You RememberThese?" in which I thanked everyone who helped put this all together. Including You Glenn, and John and all of the men from the USS Edisto. (I even managed to get a menu for a Thanksgiving dinner from the cook on the Edisto). What a wonderful gift for them to watch and re live the memories anytime. And non of it could have been done with out your help.

So now moving forward 5 years, Things have been difficult this year. I am in bed recovering from splenetic aneurysm surgery. This past Monday the 10th. and Dad (Steve) had the same surgery on Tuesday the 11th. I have lived in excruciating pain since April 27th when I was rushed to the hospital thinking I was having a heart attack. I was in one hospital after another at least 1x a week since last April. Not one Dr. could figure out what was wrong with me and why I was in so much pain. My surgery was almost 6 hrs and I was cut from the bottom of my breast bone to my naval. Now I am in a different pain. Dad's surgery was simpler his was done laproscopically. Just 2 small incisions. So he is up and around.

Which is a good thing because Friday evening my brother in law passed away. I am not allowed to travel for 2 months because of the extensive risky surgery and they are all up in NJ while I am in NC. So Steve and the rest of the family will be attending and helping my sister out with funeral arrangements.

so that is all that is going on on our home front. Hare are things going with you? Again I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help in making my parents 50th wedding anniversary a huge success, and bringing our family even closer together.

Sincerely Jo-Anne Burke (daughter of Steve Clar of the USS Edisto)

On Sun, Aug 9, 2009 at 8:21 AM, Glenn D Smith <gdsmith@cfl.rr.com> wrote:

Hi Steve/Jo-Ann.

It has been a few months since I've heard from either of you so I thought I would send you a note to see if things are A-ok with you guys. I recall that Jo-Ann worked hard on putting together a Memory Book for your 50th? Wedding anniversary? Been too long and memory fades but it has been 5 or 6 years ago.

I wish you all well.

Regards,

Glenn

MAIL CALL

Correspondence between William (Tiny) Gallant and "Bonnie"

--- Forwarded Message ----

From: A2thcleaner5@aol.com

To: troutfisher@comcast.net

Sent: Friday, April 17, 2009 4:42:59 PM GMT -05:00 US/Canada Eastern

Subject: Re: Shipmate, William R. Graves

Absolutely you can share this with your shipmates. Everything I told you is true. At times the fact that so many years were lost to them becomes a bitter memory. But now Shirley is trying to get to know her son. He wants to move to Virginia to be with his birth family. However, he has a long-standing relationship with a lady who does not want to move away from her family in California So they are trying to work it out. Anyway, thank you for your kind response.

In a message dated 4/17/2009 3:20:28 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time, troutfisher@comcast.net writes:

Bonnie: I got cold shivers when I read your email.....All I kept saying to my self was WOW. How could this happen.? I am happy that your family got some closeure in the matter...If so, all of the work that we have done as a group in the last 9 years was worth it.....Bill (Tiny) Gallant....PS...Would it be alright to share this with some of my shipmates??? If not, I understand.

----- Original Message -----

From: A2thcleaner5@aol.com

To: troutfisher@comcast.net

Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 12:09:33 AM GMT -05:00 US/Canada Eastern

Subject: Re: Shipmate, William R. Graves

Hello,

I don't know if I already told you the good news. This was indeed the William Graves that I was looking for. Here's the story with a very happy ending. My sister-in-law, Shirley, was married to William Graves. He was aboard the Edisto and signed up for (we think) operation Deep Freeze and was gone for the better part of a year. They were separated and by the time he returned from this sea duty Shirley had given birth to their son. William came to see his son and the agreed upon divorce appeared to be friendly on both sides. William asked only for visitation rights for one week out of every year. Thinking that this was totally reasonable, Shirley agreed. A month went by and William returned for his one week visitation. He was to take their son to his home in Massachusetts to see his family. Shirley packed her son off for the visit never realizing that she would not see him again for 48 years. William took the child to his sister in Lynn, MA and Shirley was never able to locate him. She had no family, no money and no way to even travel to Massachusetts to look for her son. She had two other sons who were very young also and was barely able to provide for them. Meanwhile, William changed his son's name somehow on his birth certificate. Lawyers have said they don't know how it was done. We have since learned that as you stated, William, his father and grandfather were all cops in that town and had a lot of "Good Ole Boy" influence. Later William remarried to a woman that had two sons. Somehow, her name was added to the son's birth certificate and only Shirley's maiden name was left...all other information was incorrect, except the birth date and birth place, Norfolk, VA.

Now the story gets really sad. William and his new wife were getting a divorce in 1968. William was out to sea aboard the U.S.S. Wasp. William was found dead on the ship, apparently from an aneurysm of the brain. Although, he and his wife were in the process of getting a divorce she took the child and disappeared. All those years, Shirley's only peace came from thinking that her son was at least with his father who she knew loved him.

MAIL CALL

Message continued.....

When I discovered from some of your shipmates about the Navy Log and William's memorial we knew then that he was deceased. There were only three men with that name who had died and Shirley refused to believe the the one who died in 1968 was her child's father-----because that would mean that her son had been with out her and his father since he was 7 years old. It was a bitter blow to realize in the end that it was indeed her x-husband.

Apparently, the son was on the streets from age 13 and lived a very troubled life. He was taken in by his father's relatives in California from time to time.

To make a long story short, on March 1st the son, now named William Russell Graves, III, flew into Norfolk airport and had a wonderful (and very tearful) reunion with his mother and two older brothers. Since that time they have been in awe of the similarities between the brothers both in looks and personality. Shirley had a DNA test taken not because she didn't believe that this was her son, but because she has no true birth certificate or any other document that says she is his mother. She cries when she thinks of the fact that he left as a baby and returned an old man (because he truly has had a very rough life. He worked in the oil fields in California and was severely injured.) It is very difficult for her to comprehend in her mind the change from baby to man. Truthfully he looks older than she does and she is 67 and he is 48.

Please accept her heart-felt thanks for responding to my email. Because of folks like you who took the time to answer, Shirley was able to see her son again before the end of her life. Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

Bonnie Carter

In a message dated 1/26/2009 1:02:52 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time, troutfisher@comcast.net writes:

Bonnie: The Wm Graves we had on board would be about age 78 now, give or take a few years. His hair was light, I believe. I think that he told me that he was a cop at one time. For some reason, I think that this is the man you are looking for...Are you related?Tiny Gallant

----- Original message -----

From: A2thcleaner5@aol.com

Dear Edisto Shipmates, I am looking for the family of a fellow who was possibly on the Edisto around the early 1960's. I see that you had a William R. Graves from Salem, Massachusetts. I am looking for William R. Graves from Lynn, Massachusetts (very near Salem) who was a devoted Navy man. I do not know what ship he was on but I do know that the ship was in Norfolk, VA. sometime around 1960. His middle name was Russell. Would any of you remember your shipmate, William R. Graves(deceased) and possible tell me what age he would have been. Thank you for any information (memories) you may be able to provide.

Bonnie

THE STRAIGHT SKINNY!

Article submitted by the late Dan Duffy (a Friend & Coworker)

How about the special pension from the Veterans' Administration called "Aid and Attendance"? To be eligible, you are not required to have suffered an injury or wound during your military service, nor to have served overseas or to have actually experienced combat. A veteran does not have to actually die in service for his/her surviving spouse to be eligible for this benefit.

The aid and attendance benefit is not widely known, and some reports indicate it is being claimed by only one in seven persons who are eligible under its rules. Currently over 2 million widows alone are missing out simply because they don't know they are entitled to this benefit. It is a nonservice connected disability pension benefit that provides financial assistance, and is paid monthly to qualifying wartime veterans or their widowed surviving spouses.

On occasion, the VA itself appears not to know about this benefit. It has to do with confusion about how the VA defines and differentiates their "compensation" and "pension" benefits. When you call to inquire, you should ask for "financial assistance" information for veterans or their surviving spouses who served during wartime. The VA defines a pension benefit as a financial benefit for wartime veterans who have a nonservice connected disability — such as from advancing age. It can pay for in-home caretakers, a skilled nursing facility and assisted living. Low-income veterans of all wars can qualify. Their disability does not have to be war-related, and spouses of deceased veterans are also eligible.

The aid and attendance benefit allows for veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in activities of daily living (e.g. eating, bathing, dressing, toileting) to receive additional monetary benefits. It also includes individuals who are blind or a patient in a nursing home because of mental or physical incapacity.

This is called a pension benefit and is not dependent upon service-related injuries for qualification. Most veterans who are in need of assistance actually qualify for this benefit. A qualified veteran is eligible for up to \$1,632 per month, while a surviving spouse may be eligible for up to \$1,055 per month. Together, the qualified couple is eligible for up to \$1,949 monthly. This could make the difference between a veteran or surviving spouse living in a high-quality assisted facility, receiving high-quality home health care, or being forced to take the most inexpensive option.

There are various programs run by veterans organizations, and they will help you apply for the aid and attendance benefit without charge. Informative sites include www.VeteranAid.org, www.VetAssist.org and www.Veterans-Express.com. If you cannot access information via a computer, people at the various senior centers can assist you. Call your local center in advance to make arrangements.

Briefly, eligibility requirements are reasonably clear cut. The veteran must have been discharged from service under honorable conditions; and the veteran must have served at least

wartime and must have had 90 days of continuous military service. The veteran is not required to have served on the battle field; just during wartime.

Unfortunately, net worth is a bit of a hazy issue. The www.vetassist.org Web site tells us that the VA suggests that its own adjudicators use a certain amount of personal judgment on this issue. The bottom line often is this: Does it realistically appear that the veteran or surviving spouse may outlive their assets? If they will likely outlive their assets, they are likely eligible.

Residences, vehicles and life insurance policies do not count. As a general rule of thumb, assets should not exceed \$80,000. I understand that amount may drop depending on the age of the claimant. There is also an income requirement, and all income is included, no matter the source.

Some of the organizations mentioned will file a claim for you, but you can also

file for yourself. Be sure to follow all instructions carefully and include all necessary documentation. Keep copies of all correspondence between yourself and the VA and promptly respond to all requests for information.

Be aware that there is the possibility that all veterans' organizations will not be fully knowledgeable about the Aid and



SENIOR MOMS

By Ja Byr

Attendance Pension. This statement is not meant to criticize any organization, but it is a fact we have found to be true. Do not give up if you are told by a service office or other VA representative that the Aid and Attendance Pension does not exist or that you or your loved one is not eligible if you believe they are.

• Senior calendar

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Call 301-464-7448 to reserve a spot for one of the following no-cost, educational workshops covering the topics of estate planning and asset preservation: Nov. 2 or 16 at 7 p.m. or Nov. 4 or 17 at 10:30 a.m. Thank you for reading. Stay well. See you next week.

THE STRAIGHT SKINNY!



LITTLE KNOWN TIDBIT OF NAVAL HISTORY...

The U.. S. S. Constitution (Old Ironsides), as a combat vessel, carried **48,600 gallons of fresh water** for her crew of 475 officers and men. This was sufficient to last six months of sustained operations at sea. She carried no evaporators (i.e. fresh water distillers).

However, let it be noted that according to her ship's log, "On July 27, 1798, the U.S.S. Constitution sailed from Boston with a full complement of 475 officers and men, 48,600 gallons of fresh water, 7,400 cannon shot, 11,600 pounds of black powder and **79,400 gallons of rum.**"

Her mission: "To destroy and harass English shipping."

Making Jamaica on 6 October, she took on 826 pounds of flour and **68,300 gallons of rum.**

Then she headed for the Azores , arriving there 12 November. She provisioned with 550 pounds of beef and **64,300 gallons of Portuguese wine.**

On 18 November, she set sail for England . In the ensuing days she defeated five British men-of-war and captured and scuttled 12 English merchant ships, **salvaging only the rum** aboard each.

By 26 January, her powder and shot were exhausted. Nevertheless, although unarmed she made a night raid up the Firth of Clyde in Scotland . Her landing party captured a whisky distillery and transferred **40,000 gallons of single malt Scotch** aboard by dawn. Then she headed home.

The U.. S. S. Constitution arrived in Boston on 20 February 1799, with no cannon shot, no food, no powder, **no rum, no wine, no whisky**, and 38,600 gallons of water.



GO NAVY

Scuttlebutt

Dues:

Dues period is **January 01 to December 31st**

As noted in our Treasurer's report, there are 224 Members paid up for 2009 which means there are approximately 100 members in arrears. Your dues and contributions pay for the printing and publishing of this newsletter, the hosting fees for our web site www.ussedistoagb2.com as well as the cost to print

and mail Membership packages, Certificates and other correspondence to shipmates.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

At the last all-hands meeting in Baton Rouge, the members voted to provide a LIFE MEMBERSHIP. The fee is \$100 for current members and \$120 for new members. Contact Jim Jensen 715-585-2399 for more information and current status on dues.

Edisto History Book

Historian Jon Newton has been tasked by the Association members to put together the complete history of the USS Edisto AG89/AGB-2. The book would be in color, bound and would be coffee-table style. It was agreed by the members present that the Association would be responsible for a minimum publication of 300 books. The estimated cost is \$35 per copy. Jon would donate his time, skills and energies but would like to be reimbursed for his out-of-pocket expenses. If you wish to receive a copy – or copies - you may join other shipmates that have already paid for the book by sending a check or money order made out to the **USS EDISTO ASSOCIATION** and mail to our Treasurer.

James Jensen
N 4792 Homestead Rd
Hawkins, WI 54530

Executive Officers Elected in Baton Rouge

President, Gerald (Jerry) Downs
Vice Pres., David Collins
Secretary, William (Tiny) Gallant
Treasurer, James Jensen

Question on Medals

Shipmate Myron Fairbanks asks, "Does anyone among you have evidence that those of us who made Northern cruises are entitled to wear the Arctic Service Medal?"

Shipmate Darryl Kenning states that many of us earned at least three medals and possibly four; Antarctic, National Defense, Good Conduct (maybe), and Expeditionary. Anyone want to add to this or comment?

Military Records – Personnel File

If you haven't already done so, you may wish to request the Navy send you your personnel file.

To obtain more information and submit a request go to <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evtreacs/> and at

the bottom of the page, click on Request Military Records.

EMAIL ADDRESS

Please send me your current email address. Send to ussedisto@cfl.rr.com so that I can update my files accordingly. Your contact information may be shared with other members but is isn't given to anyone outside the Association. Members may request an updated address list by email or post card.

MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS NOW!

Call 1-401-732-6000 or 1-800-227-6963. Tell them you are with the USS Edisto Association Group or go online to www.crowneplaza.com/warwickri and enter the code **USE**. Make your reservations **before** the cutoff date of September 16th or the rates go up. You may cancel without penalty 24 hours before expected arrival.

SHIP'S STORE

Painting \$20 (includes S&H)



13 x 19 inches



Hats \$25



**Send check or money order payable to USS EDISTO ASSOCIATION
and mail to Glenn Smith**

P.O. Box 747, Mims, FL 32754

Hats \$25 Painting \$20

S&H is included