



## 2011 REUNION

Reunion ~ Charleston, South Carolina  
October 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Hey Fellow Shipmates!

Let me introduce myself. My name is Rufus Ornduff; I was aboard ship from 1952-1955. My rank was 1<sup>st</sup> Class Petty Officer Boiler Technician. I was born in East Tennessee & that is where all of my shipmates know me from. I have lived in South Carolina for the past forty (40) yrs. As you will see, I do love this state & that's why I urge you to book as many fun filled days as you can because you will not be able to see all that Charleston has to offer in a day. Charleston has so much to experience & history like no other city in the USA. Charleston has the most beautiful harbor in the USA (not my words but many travel magazines). We have old plantations to visit; Fort Sumter is the site of the first shot in the civil war. Patriots Point is where we will board the carrier U.S.S. Yorktown & this is the location of our Memorial Service. The admission will be paid by the ships funds. There will be a beautiful dinner cruise on the Charleston Bay with all the sights visible in the spectacular evening moonlight. What an enjoyable evening to relax & take in the Battery's beautiful old homes & the awesome spanned Cooper River Bridge all lit up & spectacular.

I would like to thank my Co-Host LTJG Ben Bowden. Ben is from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Remember to give Ben a big thank you for all of his hard work & ideas that he has added into our reunion to help make it one of your best vacation/reunions you could ever imagine.

*Rufus Ornduff*

**First and foremost: We need to have the number of people who plan on going on the cruise and tour to have the registration form to Carl Cox no later than September 2, 2011. That means you probably need to mail no later than August 25th, 2011.**

The reason we need this information is for planning purposes. It so much easier to plan an event if you know the number attending. The tour company doing the scheduling for us needs the number attending 30 days in advance. **However, if you find out you can attend after these dates have passed send in your registration to Carl. We cannot lower the number of attendees after September 2<sup>nd</sup>, but we can still add names to the list. In short if you do not get your registration in by September 2<sup>nd</sup>, you can still send it in to Carl. But we are asking that you get it in early as possible.**

Rufus and Ben have worked hard to put together, what I think will be one of the best reunions in recent memory. From what I can read and find out the river cruise with dinner is truly outstanding. **ON BEHALF OF RUFUS AND BEN, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO INVITE EACH AND EVERY MEMBER TO THE 2011 USS JOHN R. PIERCE SAILORS' ORGANIZATION ANNUAL REUNION.**

I hope every member attends the 2011 reunion. If your have any questions please contact:

Rufus Ornduff: 803-755-1989  
 Ben Bowden: 843-390-1453  
 Cecil Thompson: 337-537-7533

Please note the Mayor of Charlestown will be unable to speak at the reunion due to other commitments. An alternate speaker is being arranged.

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**NEW MEMBERS**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>RATE/RANK</b>	<b>YEARS ON BOARD</b>	
<b>Joe K. Lawler</b>	<b>SN</b>	<b>1949</b>	
<b>TAPS</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>RATE/RANK</b>	<b>YEARS ON BOARD</b>	<b>DATE OF PASSING</b>
<b>Wilburn N. High</b>	<b>SH2</b>	<b>1949-1954</b>	<b>May 17, 2011</b>

USS John R. Pierce Treasurer Report June 30, 2011

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenses</b>	
Annual Dues	\$555.00	News Letter	\$185.80
Interest	\$11.35		
Reunion:	\$812.00		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$1,378.35</b>		<b>\$185.80</b>

April 01, 2011 Opening                      June 30, 2011 Closing

Checking (1)	\$3,400.49	\$3,400.49
Checking (2)	\$3,233.07	\$4,415.65
CD 1	\$2,449.49	\$2,454.63
CD 2	\$8,560.19	\$8,562.35
CD 3	\$5,462.64	\$5,462.78
Savings	\$5,082.12	\$5,084.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28,188.00</b>	<b>\$29,380.55</b>

The following was provided by **Thomas Matonti FTG 2**  
(UNEDITED)

### **A Brooklyn New York Sailor 1968 to 1975**

I served as a “Tin Can Sailor” on three Destroyers out of the Brooklyn Navy Yard during my active reserve years as a FTG 3 then 2. My first reserve ship was the USS Bristol DD 857 a Sumner class destroyer which served from March 1945 until it was decommissioned in November 1969. We would go out on training weekends in the New York Atlantic area each month until my next ship came. The J.R. Pierce DD753 a Sumner class destroyer which served from December 1944 to decommissioning in 1973. I served on her except for the time I was on active duty in 1970 on the USS Shangri-La discussed later. We did training drills each month with the full crew on board. These destroyers were in active service during the war (WW II) and then as they got older and replaced by new ships they were put in the Reserve Navy with a Skelton crew which would be augmented by weekend sailors like me. We would sail from the Brooklyn Navy Yard down the lower bay and out to the Atlantic Ocean passing Brooklyn and Staten Island the New Jersey. We would stay out for the weekend (Fri night, Sat and Sun) do our training drills then return on Sunday afternoon. Sometimes we would sail up the East River past all the tall apartment buildings and people would wave at us in our dress white uniforms. When I came back from active duty on Shangri-La I served on my third and last destroyer the USS Dyess DD 880 a Gearing class destroyer which served from January 1945 to 1981 decommissioning. She was the newest class I served on and had a good time on her. They all had 5-38 inch guns to use for ship to ship or ship to shore bombardment. They were loud guns.

I worked as a FTG3 the 2<sup>nd</sup> class later on, taking care of Fire Control Radar for the guns, as a weekend active reservist we drilled one weekend a month and then 2 weeks in the summer. We would go to the Mediterranean Sea for the 6<sup>th</sup> fleet training. We sailed from Brooklyn to Bermuda for fuel then the Azores then Gibraltar (the British rock) in the mouth of the Med. We saw Spain and France with great liberty ports. Then we flew home to New York as our 2 weeks were up. I had a good time on all three ships. I remember waiting on the chow line while tied up to the pier at the Brooklyn Navy Yard and smelling the Hops from the Schaffer Beer Brewery across the pier from us. Wishing we could have a beer with chow. I worked in Combat Information Central, the computer room and fire control radar. We spent a weekend on the ship while it was in dry-dock in Philadelphia, still had to drill that was funny. Another time we drove up to Rhode Island the base at Newport and sailed out from there for the weekend then back home.

The time on Destroyers was for training and guys would get transferred off to Active duty for the Vietnam War. So one day I got my orders for active duty in 1969 and was gone thru 1970. I was to fly from New York to Mayport Florida and report aboard the USS Shangri-La CVA 38 she was an Essex class carrier built during the War. Having been used to Destroyers I was overwhelmed at the size of the carrier which I walked aboard at the Quarter Deck. The hangar bay was huge no planes on board as we were in port. Every time I went somewhere on the ship I got lost I missed my destroyers, but after a few months I knew my way around. Being in a Fire Control man I was in Fox division which had many work places all over the ship. Two Mark 56 directors on either side and a Mark 37 on the island superstructure. We also had a computer well below decks too.

So I asked the chief where did the ship cruise last and he said the Med for Mediterranean Sea between Europe and Africa. This is where the 6<sup>th</sup> fleet is home ported in Naples Italy. Ports visited Malta, Naples, Mallorca, Crete, Athens, and Barcelona, La spieza in 67 to 68 and Rome in 69. So chief where are we going next and he says a West Pac cruise to Vietnam with the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet or Tonkin Gulf.

So I was surprised that an east coast carrier would sail around the world (which we did) to go there and come back from in 287 days in 1970. It took us a month to sail there from Mayport, Florida while

stopping in Rio de Janeiro Brazil for fuel oil and food and liberty. We played volley ball on the beach in the winter pretty cool. Then we sailed around the point of South America across to Africa fro another tanker refueling then we headed for the Philippines. Once there we went back and forth to Vietnam to launch our planes on the Ho Chi Men Trail for bombing runs. Being in Weapons Dept. we had to help with the handling of the bombs and missiles being taken aboard from the supply ship and putting them on planes on the flight deck.

We served for 6 or 7 months, during that time of being on the line we bombed the trail, but the Shangri-La always had Destroyers around her for plane guard and anti air patrols.

Typically we served for 4 weeks on the line then two weeks in Subic Bay Philippines for liberty and ship repairs. Our liberty ports were Yokosuka Japan for a week while we got our damaged prop replaced. (The ship would shake at 33 knots during flight ops). Also went to Hong Kong for a week. A scary day was when a hurricane came into port area and our ship left port for open water and we had to sleep on a pier till our "Shang" with number 38 all lit up came back for us. Bought a camera and stereo gear while there on liberty. Some guys bought motorcycles. On the way home we went to Wellington New Zealand for a few days, great beer and singing songs at a piano bar. Then Sydney Australia, which was great as the girls wore mini skirts and picked us up on motorcycles and we drove off into town for liberty.

Then we continued home going around Antarctica to back to Rio De Janiero for fuel and more beer and girls. Then home to Mayport, Florida or Jacksonville. We were home for a few months before we loaded all our cars and motorcycles on the ship to sail to Boston Mass for decommissioning. We left our air wing CVW 8 fly off to NAS Jacksonville.

Well after a few months in Boston working for decommissioning I got my orders to go back home, so I jumped in my new Triumph and drove back to Brooklyn New York and my last destroyer from 1971 to 1975 the J.R Pierce and Dyess. Home again with my destroyers but I missed the planes A4 sky hawks and F8 Crusaders and the COD mail plane.

I was surprised at how the Shangri-La got her name from President Roosevelt. After Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941 he asked the Navy for an attack on Tokyo to show Japan that we had fight in us. A submarine commander saw B-25s flying over a carrier silhouette on a runway and got the idea to use them on a carrier take off for Japan attack.

The President was pleased with this idea so Col. Doolittle was put in charge and modified some B-25s and put 16 on the USS Hornet on April 18, 1942 our newest carrier, and along with the carrier USS Enterprise for air cover plus 4 cruisers and 8 destroyers and 2 oilers sailed from Hawaii to the coast of Japan. The planes were flown off flew over several Japanese cities and flew on to China. So the Press asked the president were they came from and he said "Shangri-LA" so as not to let the Japanese know how we did it.

The American people were fired up and raised the money to build a new carrier and she was launched Feb 24, 1944 at Norfolk Navy Yard, Portsmouth VA. Commissioned Sept 15, 1944 and accepted into the Pacific Fleet or 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet. Her first war diary was April 25, 1945 with air sorties at Okino Diata Jima. (Near Okinawa). She did bomb the Japanese homeland and was called the "Tokyo Express".

Well that's my cruise story of my 4 ships. I am thankful to the Navy for teaching me electronics and allowing me to get my degree as an Electrical Engineer for Con Edison of NY for 37 years. They were all good ships and plenty of adventure sailing on them.

Thomas Matonti FTG 2

Member of Shangri-La, Dyess, Bristol and J.R. Pierce Associations.

April 24, 2011.

**RESERVATION FORM**

**U.S.S. JOHN R PIERCE DD-753 2011 REUNION**

**October 5-9, 2011**

**CHARLESTON, SC**

**(Please print all information)**

**Shipmate Name (name on tag)**

\_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**19\_\_ to 19\_\_ Rate \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_**

**Spouse Name (name on tag)**

\_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_**

**Guest Name (name on tag)**

\_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_**

**October 5 – Wednesday  
0800-1700 Registration Open  
1000 – 2200 Hospitality Room Open  
Dinner on your own**

**October 6 - Thursday  
1000-2200 Hospitality Room Open  
17:30: Board busses for Dinner Cruise (Depart 18:15)  
22:00: Return to Hotel from Dinner Cruise**

**October 7 – Friday  
0930 Hospitality Room Open  
1000 Board Buses for Patriots Point  
1100 Memorial aboard USS Yorktown  
1430 Board busses for return to hotel  
Lunch on your own (Avail on USS Yorktown)  
Dinner on your own**

**October 8 - Saturday  
0930 – Executive Meeting  
1000 – General Meeting  
1200 – Hospitality Room Open  
1700 – Pictures  
1800 – Cocktail hour (Cash Bar)  
1900 – Dinner  
1945 – Speaker – To Be Determined  
Drawing for gifts**

**October 9 – Depart – Good Byes – Have a safe trip home and thank you for coming**

**DINNER  
TWO SELECTIONS – PICK ONE PER ATTENDEE**

#1 \_\_\_ Sliced London broil, with all the trimmings

#2 \_\_\_ Grilled Salmon Fillet, with lemon Caper Sauce and all the trimmings

Registration	\$15.00 X ___	Persons = \$ ___
Dinner Cruise	\$70.00 X ___	Persons = \$ ___
Tour	Free X ___	Persons = \$ <u>00.00</u>
Dinner Banquet	\$31.00 X ___	Persons = \$ ___
Total		\$ ___

\*\*\*\*\*Please note: In order to keep the cost down, the reunion committee recommended the tour be paid out of the USS John R Pierce treasury. The executive board unanimously approved the recommendation. Savings equal approximately \$35 per person (\$70 per couple). This includes the bus and entry fee to Patriot Point. For those of you who are members of TIN CAN SAILORS please bring your membership card as entry is free.\*\*\*\*\*

Make All Checks or Money Orders Payable To:

USS JOHN R PIERCE DD-753 SAILORS ORG INC.

MAIL TO

CARL COX  
4610 HOMINY RIDGE ROAD  
SPRINGFIELD, OH 45502

HOTEL INFORMATION

Radisson  
5991 Rivers Avenue  
North Charleston, SC 29420  
Telephone: 843-744-2501

TELEPHONE: 843-744-2501 – THEN ENTER 0 AND MAKE YOUR RESERVATION  
MAKE SURE YOU MENTION YOU ARE WITH THE USS JOHN R PIERCE REUNION

IF ANYONE HAS SPECIAL REQUESTS OF THE HOTEL CALL THE ABOVE NUMBER AND ENTER  
EXTENSION 7125 OUR CONTACT IS MS. CHRIS WALTZ

FREE AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE IS AVAIL FROM THE HOTEL (APPROX 10 MINS) JUST CALL THE  
HOTEL UPON ARRIVAL

ROOM RATE: \$89.00 (PLUS TAX)  
(RATE GOOD FROM 2 DAYS UNTIL 2 DAYS AFTER THE REUNION)

SUGGEST EVERYONE ARRIVE TUESDAY OCTOBER 4, 2011