

USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter May - August, 2009

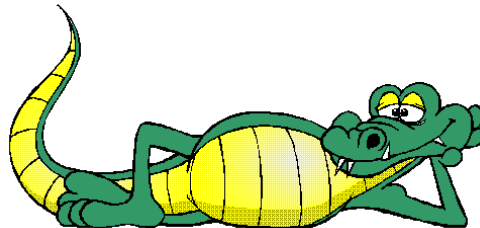
Welcome to the USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter

Twenty-third Edition: The USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter is a publication issued every four months by the USS Plymouth Rock Ships Association. If you would like to contribute an article, a piece of Navy or Plymouth Rock history, photo, memory or anything that might be of interest to you or other shipmates, you can send it as an e-mail to:

Bill Provencal, Association Secretary at:
billinp@metrocast.net

or regular mail at:
Bill Provencal
37 South Main Street
Pittsfield, NH 03263

If you change **address** or **e-mail address** be sure to let me (Bill Provencal) know so we can update our Crews List. My e-mail is billinp@metrocast.net Our ships website is found at www.ussplymouthrock.com



Recent Address Changes to the Ships Muster List

LT Robert Clark, Fairfax, VA E-Mail address: bbclark5@cox.net

Dale Richardson, RD3, Star City, IN Corrected E-mail address: fdr@pwratc.com

Mike Welsh, BM2, San Diego, CA. E-Mail address: mikewelsh92102@aol.com

Ken Wagner, EM2, 125 Willow Lane, Schererville, IN 46375 E-Mail address:
kenwag412@sbcglobal.net



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★ ★ ★ Welcome Aboard ★ ★ ★



Recently Located Shipmates

Dale Richardson, RD3, 5237 S. 250 East, Star City, IN 46985.

Corrected E-Mail address: fdr@pwrtp.com

Edward J. Gallagher, MS2, 400 Mayfield Lane, Townsend, DE. E-Mail address: edwinjgallagher@verizon.net

Paul Walter (Walt), EN2, 304 E. Plymouth Street, Bremen, IN 46506. E-Mail Address: pwalter@mchsi.com

Herb Furman, OS3, 2226 S. Broadway, Wellsburg, NY 14894. E-mail address is herbfurman@aol.com





Ships Website and Newsletter

I would like to thank all Crew members who have made photo contributions to the website and photo and articles to the newsletter in the past 10 years. We do welcome any photo or article that you might wish to contribute that fellow shipmates might find interesting. On our last mailing of the newsletter we sent out 134 copies to dues paying members and e-mailed all other shipmates a copy.

We are averaging over 450 visits to the website each month and now have a total of 56,474 since the website was created back in 1999. I enjoy hearing from former shipmates by e-mail and their comments/contributions/criticisms.

The ships website address is: www.ussplymouthrock.com

My personal e-mail address is billinp@metrocast.net

My mailing address is

Bill Provencal
37 South Main Street
Pittsfield, NH 03263
Phone: 603-435-8603

Bill Provencal, Secretary/Webmaster USS Plymouth Rock Association



Thank You's

We would like to thank the following shipmates/friends for providing pictures, information and articles to the website, the Ships Association and newsletter.

Glen McDonald, SN	Richard Bergeron, BMSN	LTJG Peter Stark
Norm Stackhouse BT2	Ron Miller, EN3	



Paid Association Members for 2009-2010

As of August 23, 2009 we now have 139 paid members

Become a Member of the Ships Association

As you can imagine any group or association such as ours requires funds. The funds are used primarily for paying the costs of the Website (server fees, registration of our .com address), mailing out the newsletter to all paying dues members (printing, postage), general mailings up-front cost of upcoming reunion and postage. Our primary source of revenue are the bi-annual dues of **\$25.00**. To become a member of the USS Plymouth Rock Association complete the Application for Membership which can be found in the Ships Website on the Links Page or call/write/e-mail either my self or Paul Mohawk and we will send you an application.

The 2009-2010 dues are now due, please send dues to Paul Mohawk, Treasurer. Make checks payable to USS Plymouth Rock Association. Dues are payable on a bi-annual basis (every two years) at \$25.00 and are due on the year of the reunion (are due on an even year 2004, 2006, 2008, etc). *Should a member or prospective member pay at any other time, dues will be credited from the preceding even year.* All dues paying members receive the Newsletter three times a year by US Mail. Paul Mohawk's address is: 5558 Canyon Lands Drive, Ft. Worth, TX 76137

If your name does not appear on this list and you have paid your dues, please let Paul Mohawk know as soon as possible. His e-mail address is pshawks@charter.net

Adam, Ian	Andersen, Harry	Alardyce, John	Anstett, William	Baldwin, Brad
Balf, Priscilla	Bell, Joe	Bellingham, Paul II	Bena, Joe	Bentheimer, Glenn
Bergeron, Richard	Bierce, George	Bild, Bob	Black, Robert C.	Britt, Ben
Brown, Alvin G.	Brusky, David	Brunton, Thomas	Buchanan, Richard	Buiak, Peter Jr.
Caldwell, Tim	Cartwright, Richard	Casillas, Greg	Clark, Nick	Clark, Robert
Comstock, Ed	Conboy, Bill	Conklin, Robert T	Conroy, Michael	Crowl II, Martin C.
Cummings, Bob	Cummings, Steve	Cypher, Hal	Cyr, Dennis	Czarnetski, Bruce
Czarnetski, Jon	Dailey, Ronald J.	Dalfonzo, Sam	Dawson, Kenneth E.	Derry, Thomas K.
DiFranco, Joseph	Dortch, David	Dushane, David	Dussault, Andrew	Edwards, Maurice
Eldridge, Marguerite	Farneski, Robert	Fisher, Jack	Fisher, Jay	Formaro, Frank
Forton, Mary	Freeman, James	Gallagher, Edward	Gee, James	Goodman, William
Greco, Charliene	Guertin, Jerry	Hart, Ed.	Hartson, George	Haws, Joe
Haynie, Bill	Helledy, David	Hickson, Thomas W., Sr	Hicks, Richard	Hill, Edward Jr.
Hopper, Richard	Howland, John	Hyatt, Walter	Ishmael, Harry	Jacques, Doug
Jennings, Seeley	Jepson, Norm	Joyce, Ed.	Kane, Thomas	Kaderka, Leonard
King, Ronald	Kluczinsky, Andy	Krolak, Ray	Kuhns, Jimmy	Lamay, Roger
Larson, Jerry	Lavallee, Leo	Lee, Thomas P.	Lillig, Bernie F	Luttrell, James
Macomber, Brandon	Mathis, Richard	McCully, Wade Sr.	Means, Carlon	Miller, Dale
Miller, Ronald	Miskelly, Francis	Mohawk, Paul	Musella, Rocco	Nichols, Bob
O'Neill, Thomas	Pihl, Walter C.	Power, Rand	Provencal, Bill	Purvis, Anthony
Pyle, Ted	Ramondetta, Vic	Reed, John F.	Rhine, Don	Richardson, Dale
Ringer, Joseph E.	Robertson, Allen	Robinson, Jim	Roe, Lawrence "Ed"	Rose, Christopher
Savage, David	Scott, Bill	Shanahan, Robert	Shewchuk, Richard	Shober, Robert
Sims, Bill	Smith, James	Smith, Larry E.	Snider, Lester	Stackhouse, Norman
Stark, Jr., Peter A.	Stull, John III	Swart, Mike	Swathwood, David	Swearingen, Ron
Tacinelli, Jerry	Tesh, Sam	Thibodeau, Doug	Toungette, Mike	Tunstall, Van
Viaene, Lois	Wagner, Thomas F.	Walker, Gerald M.	Warwick, Robert	Watkins, Richard P.
Watson, Ernest	Watts, Richard A.	Whittle, David	Ziamba, James	



Photo series contributed by Glen McDonald, SN. Photos were taken while the ship was in the North Atlantic in 1978 on a 6 month cruise to England; Amsterdam; Keil, Germany; Brest, France; Barcelona and Santander, Spain; Naples, Italy and Jamaica.



Man over board

The Plymouth Rock had just returned from a cruise and was moored starboard side to the pier at NOB Norfolk. Across the wharf from us was an Aircraft Carrier. I believe she was the Essex. About 0930 I was in the spud locker peeling a couple of hundred of potatoes when suddenly the bitch box came alive. "MAN OVER BOARD! This IS NOT a drill! MAN OVER BOARD, Starboard side. Life boat crews man your boat." By the time I reported to my topside station the area was alive with activity. The Essex was in mid channel and smoke was billowing from her stacks as she was making back full in order to stop. A tug boat was in a hard turn to port and her screws were kicking up a large rooster tail. Whistles, sirens, and horns were sounding all over the port. Near by ships were lowering their boats. Sailors on the dock were throwing any thing that would float into the water. The whole commotion reminded me of a scene from Mr. Roberts. You know the scene where the drunken crew is coming back from liberty, and a sailor rides a motorcycle off the end of the dock. After a short time a Tug

picked up the sailor and returned him to the pier and the waiting shore patrol. And the Essex put out to sea with one less crewmen. Later we got the word on what had happened.

The Essex had just cleared the wharf when a taxi cab came barreling down the dock. Out of the cab jumped a Sailor in Dress Blues and Pea Coat. He kissed his old lady good-by and took off running after his ship. He got to the end of the dock and without missing a step he ran off the end. He hit the water in full stride and took off swimming after the big carrier. He swam a couple of hundred feet before he tired out and was having trouble staying afloat. All total the sailor was in the water about 15 minutes before rescue.

Norm Stackhouse BT2
USS Plymouth Rock LSD 29
1962-1964



Charleston, SC Reunion Information (Things to see in Charleston)

■ **☞** Date has been set for the 2010 Reunion

September 2010 from Monday the 20th thru Thursday the 23rd with check out on Friday the 24th. You can now plan your time off to attend the reunion in Charleston.

Current Status of Reunion

Dave Dortch , Reunion Coordinator has made contact with two Reunion Tour Groups in the Charleston Area and hopes to be visiting the Charleston area in September. We should have complete information as to costs, programs etc in the December issue of the Newsletter. If you wish to contact David, at 870-236-3725, or by e-mail at tazrhondave@yahoo.com

PATRIOTS POINT MUSEUM **HISTORIC CHARLESTON HARBOR**

The history of Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum began in the summer of 1975 when the legendary aircraft carrier USS Yorktown appeared on the horizon of Charleston Harbor. A few months later, celebrating the October 13th birthday of the United States Navy, Yorktown was opened to the public as a museum and the Patriots Point mission was underway.



Patriots Point would become one of the largest museums of its kind in the world with the addition of other ships such as the destroyer USS Laffey, known as The Ship That Would Not Die. The Treasury class Coast Guard cutter Ingham would join the Patriots Point battle group along with the Balao class submarine Clamagore.

Priceless war planes from WWII and Korea are featured in Yorktown's hangar deck and on the flight deck an array of aircraft from the Vietnam War and Desert Storm up to modern marvels such as the F-14 Tomcat and S-3 Viking.

And from the deltas of southeast Asia, the Vietnam Base Camp replica tells the story of the River Patrol Boats and the HAL-3 Seawolves helicopter crews.

THE H. L. HUNLEY TOUR

On February 17, 1864 the Confederate Submarine, the Hunley successfully sank the USS Housatonic in Charleston harbor by ramming her with a spar torpedo. She was the first submarine to be used successfully in naval warfare. Lost for 136 years after this momentous victory the Hunley was successfully raised from the ocean floor in August of 2000. Today she and her crew have been successfully preserved in a special tank and are being studied by a renowned team of archeologists. There are on going discoveries being made about this amazing vessel and her crew. Join us for a tour of the Hunley. Includes round trip transportation to the Warren Lash Laboratory and an expert guide well versed in the Hunley's history.



These are archived pictures that I have received over the past 10 years from shipmates. Thought these would bring back memories for some of you. Bill the Editor



P. Rock at L. Creek, 1958



Helicopter Deck, 1962



Swim Call in the Med., 1958



Picking up Marines, Onslow, NC, 1970



Loading the Aluminat, 1967



Minelayer given to Turkey, 1958



FORT WORTH, Texas - The chief of Naval Operations (CNO) welcomed the Navy's first Joint Strike Fighter, the F-35C Lightning II, to the fleet in a ceremony July 28.

The F-35C is the Navy's first stealth fighter and enables the Navy to decrease the time from threat to response at sea. The aircraft possesses uncompromised carrier suitability and low-maintenance stealth materials designed for long-term durability in the carrier environment.

Adm. Gary Roughead, CNO, said this aircraft adds tremendous capability to the fleet.

"Our Sailors will never be in a fair fight because this airplane will top anything that comes its way. It will give our Sailors and pilots the tactical and technical advantage in the skies and it will relieve our aircraft as they age out," Roughead said.

CNO said the pace of operations has not been easy on Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, and Marines, nor on the ships and aircraft they rely on. He said the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter is essential to addressing the Navy, and more importantly the nation's, strike fighter needs.

"It is most exciting for me to think about the young men and women who look to this uniform, who look to naval aviation and see a fulfillment in their lives and an excitement in their lives that is unmatched in any other profession in the world," Roughead said. "I thank you for what you have done and thank you for what you are going to do. It is indeed a great honor to be here."

The F-35C is on schedule to meet the Navy's initial operational capability in 2015, and combines stealth with supersonic speed and high agility. The Lightning II employs the most powerful and comprehensive sensor package ever incorporated into a fighter.

Navy News, by MC2 Rebekah Blowers



Mail Call



Paul Walter (Walt), EN2, Bremen, IN, (on board: 77-80) writes: "Has anyone ever heard from T. J. Lane or Marc Courchesne"? His e-mail address is pwalter@mchsi.com

Leo Hernandez, HM3, Phoenix, AZ, (on board 1967-69) writes: "I was contacted by e-mail by John Morris, HM2 but his e-mail does not seem to be working. John if you are out there please e-mail me again. Also, I was communicating with Joe Adamo but he has disappeared again. Anyone know where he is?" His e-mail address is leohernan@yahoo.com

Herb Furman, OS3, Wellsburg, NY 14894, (on board: 6/73-6/75) writes: "What a great time...didn't seem it at the time...but many fond memories. 2 carib cruises and a Med cruise...who can forget all those vertreps...remember the BOYS from Combat..and there fearless leader Prattboy...great site...keep up the good work." His e-mail address is herbfurman@aol.com

Tom Hickson, BT3, Moline, IL, (on board 1970-72) writes: "My grand daughter, Abby Beaty, age 14, has thyroid cancer and has undergone two surgeries to date. Please let the guys know that, Any and All Prayers would be greatly appreciated" His e-mail address is cmjttt@sbcglobal.net

Bill Scott, EM2, Fairhope, AL, (on board 7/60-8/62) writes: "Trying to locate Lee Benjamin, EM3. He was on the Plymouth Rock in 1962 when I left for "Nuke" School. Any info appreciated." His e-mail address is scottwilliams@bellsouth.net



Shipmates Who Live in the State of Alabama

Ray Bryant

Gerald R. Elliott

Donald Rutledge

Mike Toungette

Anniston

Rainsville

Huntsville

Ashville

Wayne Durham

Bib Loucks

Bill Scott

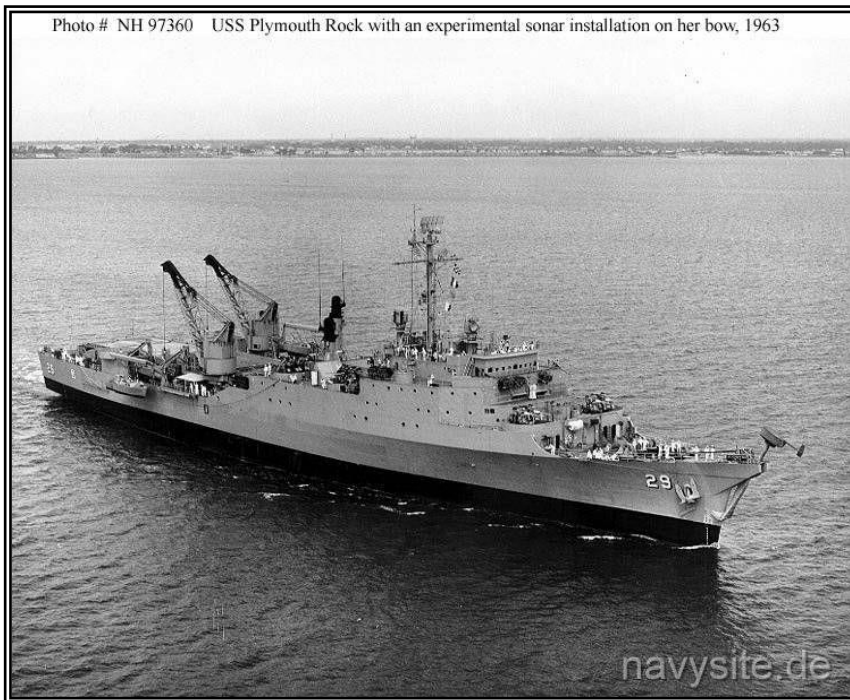
Billy Vaughan

Mobile

Enterprise

Fairhope

Midfield



Richard Bergeron, BMSN informed me that the picture on the left of the Plymouth Rock featured in the April newsletter with the sonar boom that the boom had fallen off in 1960 when the ship was coming out of Bermuda. Could this be a second sonar boom installed on the ship after the 1960 accident? Can somebody clarify this problem? This official Navy picture was taken in 1963.



"Like War": Lebanon, 1958

America intervened in Lebanon the first time 51 years ago. The USS Plymouth Rock was involved in this operation.

The largest U.S. operation by for a NATO's southern flank was the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958. Dubbed *Operation Bluebat*, it was the biggest overseas deployment between the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Bluebat lasted 102 days from July 5 to October 25 and involved the entire 6th fleet--70 ships and 40,000 sailors--as well as 14,357 ground troops. The Composite Air Strike Force and the 322nd Air Division provided air support.

The 8,215 soldiers were from the 201 Logistics Command and the 24th Airborne Brigade, built around the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 187th Infantry in Germany. Some 5,842 Marines came ashore from the 2nd Provisional Force, 2nd Marine Division.

Washington's intent: end factional fighting and prevent the country's takeover by radical Arab nationalists by Egypt and the Soviets. In response to the US action, Moscow marshaled forces and conducted military maneuvers in the Caucasus Mountains and around the Black Sea. The real U.S. target was Moscow and it's regional allies, ie. Syria. The purpose of Operation Blue Bat in Lebanon was to bolster the pro-Western Lebanese government of President Chamoun against internal opposition and threats from Syria and the United Arab Republic. The plan was to occupy and secure the Beirut International Airport, a few miles south of the city, then to secure the port of Beirut and approaches to

the city.

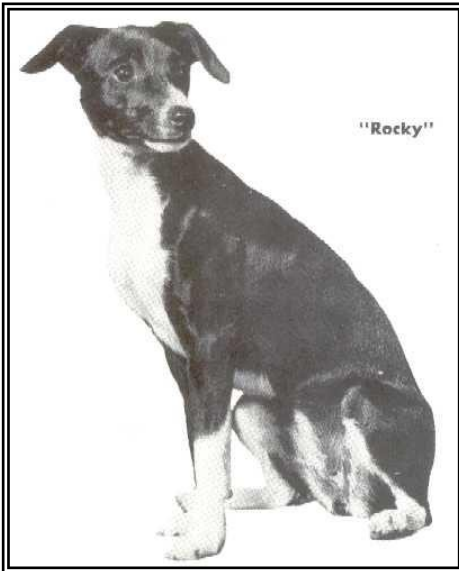
For this operation, the ship and its crew earned  "The Armed forces Expeditionary Medal.
Article and information contributed by Ron Miller, EN3



"Who was Rocky?"

LTJG Peter Stark (Capt. USN Ret.) came to my rescue with information about Rocky and part of her evolution on the ship.

I was the "G" Division Officer of GM3 Stanley Bushinski who brought her aboard New Year's Eve 1955. Ski had been on liberty in Pascagoula, Mississippi and had a few too many beers before struggling back to the ship. Seeing this "pup" he thought it would make a wonderful Ship's mascot so aboard they came. At Quarters the next morning I was made aware of the puppy with no name. The Division had already set up an area for the dog's chow and milk along with a papered area for the pumping of bilges. The entire Crew came together to insure that she had what was needed and the name "Rocky" was the popular name. As we went to sea headed for our home port, the "G" div. crew took her to their working spaces with her favorite was the Portside 3"/50 Gun Mount which was Ski's battle station (your newsltr. pic. shows her on deck next to mount 34). Rocky gained her "sea legs" sailing to Norfolk . The Deck Dept Head, Lt Bill Flynn, was also won over by Rocky and when it came time to have her "wormed" saw to it that Rocky was delegated to my wife and me because we had a back yard available from our second



story apartment. Rocky was left with my wife for 2 days while we were on the ship during the day and she "cried" nonstop for her boys . The evolution came off O.K. with put a few small deposits before she could get down the back stairs. Having reached our homeport , we became aware of why our Skipper , Cdr. Dan Bontecou, was so easily persuaded to allow Rocky to be the Mascot. He brought his German Sheppard aboard by the next time we were headed to sea. My stateroom was on the '02 deck port. The Captains Cabin was Amidships on that deck and much to my consternation, that dog that messed like an elephant and lifted his leg in front of my SR door. The 2 of us that shared the SR, after not looking but one time for the mess, never made that mistake again.. One last remark about Rocky : When we were in port and the Crew was returning from Liberty , Rocky sat at the quarter deck and greeted P-R Sailors returning. If someone not of the crew was about to "come aboard" they would be met with a low growl. I left the ship during our Med trip in the summer of 1956 and Rocky was still holding forth. Quite a dog.



The Pope died and went to heaven. He was stopped at the gate by a sleepy watchman who asked him, "Yeah, what do you want? The Pope thought, "Great! I do 50 years of God's work to get stopped by this guy." Then he says "Look I am the Pope. I have done many years of God's works." The watchman (a BM2) says, "We ain't got any orders for you. Go get some rest and we'll see you in the morning." He then gives the Pope directions to an old WWII open bay barracks. The Pope goes in to find all the lower bunks taken and the only lockers left have

no doors. So he throws his gear under his rack and goes to sleep. The next morning he is awakened by loud music and cheering. He runs to the window to see a long black limo with a US Navy Chief in the back, smoking a huge cigar, hanging on to a mug of fresh hot coffee (could have been Jack & Coke) and with two beautiful blonde angels hanging on to him. The Pope is angry and goes to the night watch. He says, "Look, I'm the Pope! I do 50 years of God's work aboard the Vatican only to see some Navy Chief that probably did everything imaginable a sailor would do and he gets treated like royalty!" The watchman says, "Pope! We get Popes every 20 to 30 years. This is our first ever Navy Chief."



Too Few Medals of Honor?

Eight years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq. About 4,000 members of the U.S. military killed in action.



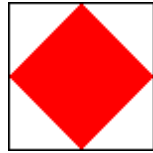
More than 34,000 wounded. Just six considered worthy of America's highest military award for battlefield valor. For some veterans and members of Congress, that last number doesn't add up. They question how so few Medals of Honor - all awarded posthumously - could be bestowed for wars of such magnitude and duration.

Pentagon officials say the nature of war has changed. Laser-guided missiles destroy enemy positions without putting soldiers in harm's way. Insurgents deploy roadside bombs rather than engage in firefights they're certain to lose.

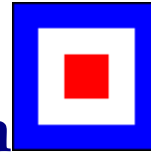
Those explanations don't tell the whole story, said Rep. Duncan Hunter, a first-term lawmaker who served combat tours as a Marine in Iraq and Afghanistan. He has sponsored legislation that directs the defense secretary to review current trends in awarding the Medal of Honor to determine what's behind the low count. The bill passed the House. If Senate negotiators go along, Secretary Robert Gates would have to report back by March 31. "It seems like our collective standard for who gets the Medal of Honor has been raised," said Hunter, R-Calif.

"The basis of warfare is you've got to take ground and then you've got to hold it. That takes people walking into houses, running up hills, killing bad guys and then staying there and rebuffing counterattacks," he said. "That's how warfare has always been no matter how many bombs you drop and how many predators you have flying around."





Navy Trivia



STRIPES AND STARS ON JUMPER UNIFORMS - On 18 January 1876, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce recommended a collar with stars and stripes as a substitute for the plain collar used on the frocks of seamen. Three stripes on the collar was proposed for all grades, with the stripes on the cuffs to indicated grade. One stripe for E-1, etc.

DISTINGUISHING MARKS/RATING BADGES - In 1841, insignia called "distinguishing marks" were first prescribed as part of the official uniform. An eagle and anchor emblem, forerunner of the rating badge, was the first distinguishing mark. In 1886 rating badges were established, and some 15 specialty marks were also provided to cover the various ratings. On 1 April 1893, petty officers were reclassified and the rating of chief petty officer was established. Until 1949 rating badges were worn on the right or left sleeve, depending on whether the person concerned was on the starboard or port watch. Since February 1948, all distinguishing marks have been worn on the right sleeve between the shoulder and elbow.

NAVY GRAY UNIFORMS - Gray uniforms in the same style as khaki were first introduced on 16 April 1943 as an officers uniform. On 3 June 1943 the uniform was extended to include Chief Petty Officers. On 31 March 1944 cooks and stewards were permitted to wear the gray uniform. The Navy abolished use of "grays" on 15 October 1949.

TAR - was given to sailors because in the old days they used to tar their clothing to make it waterproof.

DOGWATCH

A dogwatch at sea is the period between 4 and 6 p.m, the first dogwatch, or the period between 6 and 8 p.m., the second dog watch. The watches aboard ships are:

- Noon to 4:00 p.m. Afternoon watch
- 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. First dogwatch
- 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Second dogwatch
- 8:00 p.m. to midnight 1st night watch
- Midnight to 4:00 a.m. Middle watch or mid watch
- 4:00 to 8:00 a.m. Morning watch
- 8:00 a.m. to noon Forenoon watch

The dogwatches are only two hours each so the same Sailors aren't always on duty at the same time each afternoon. Some experts say dogwatch is a corruption of dodge watch and others associate dogwatch with the fitful sleep of Sailors called dog sleep, because it is a stressful watch. But no one really knows the origin of this term, which was in use at least back to 1700.



